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FROM EDINBURGH
TO INDIA AND BURMAH



FROM EDINBURGH TO
INDIA & BURMAH

BY

W. G. BURN MURDOCH

Author of

“From Edinburgh to the Antarctic,” “A Procession of the
Kings of Scotland,” etc.

*WITH TWENTY-FOUR FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR
FROM PAINTINGS BY THE AUTHOR*

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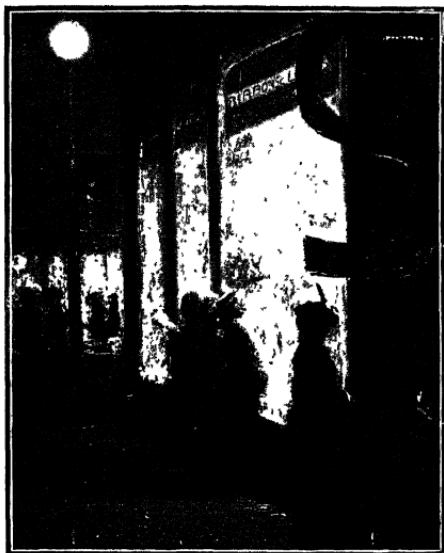
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CHAPTER I



OME time ago I wrote a book about a voyage in a whaler to the far south, to a white, silent land where the sun shines all day and night and it is quiet as the grave and beautiful as heaven — when it is not blowing and black as—the other place! A number of people said they liked it, and asked me to write again; therefore these notes and sketches on a Journey to India and Burmah. They may not be so interesting as notes

about Antarctic adventure and jolly old Shell Backs and South Spaniers on a whaler; but one journal ought at least, to be a contrast to the other. The first, a voyage on a tiny wooden ship with a menu of salt beef, biscuit, and penguin, to unsailed seas and uninhabited ice-bound lands; the other, in a floating hotel, with complicated meals, and crowds of passengers, to a hot land with innumerable inhabitants.

I trust that the sketches I make on the way will help out my notes when they are not quite King's-

English, and that the notes will help to explain the sketches if they are not sufficiently academical for the general reader, and moreover, I fondly believe that any journal written in the East in these years of grace 1905-6, must catch a little reflected interest from the historic visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to India and Burmah.

Edinburgh is our point of departure; the date 13th Oct. and the hour 10 P.M. All journeys seem to me to begin in Edinburgh, from the moment my baggage is on the dickey and the word "Waverley" is given to the cabby. On this occasion we have three cabs, and a pile of baggage, for six months clothing for hot and cold places, and sketching, shooting, and fishing things take space. I trundle down to the station in advance with the luggage, and leave G. and her maid to follow, and thus miss the tearful parting with domestics in our marble halls. . . . Good-bye Auld Reekie, good-bye. Parting with you is not all sorrow; yet before we cross the Old Town I begin to wonder why I leave you to paint abroad; for I am positive your streets are just as picturesque and as dirty and as paintable as any to be found in the world. Perhaps the very fact of our going away intensifies last impressions. . . . There is a street corner I passed often last year; two girls are gazing up at the glory of colour of dresses and ribbons and laces in electric light, and a workman reads his evening paper beside the window—it is a subject for a Velasquez—all the same I will have a shot at it, and work it up on board ship; it will make an initial letter for this first page of my journal.

Across the Old Town we meet the North Sea mist blowing up The Bridges, fighting high up with the tall arc lights. What variety of colour there is and movement; the lights of the shops flood the lower part of the street and buildings with a warm orange, there are emerald, ruby, and yellow lights in the apothecary's windows, primary colours and complementary, direct and reflected

from the wet pavements ; the clothes of passing people run from blue-black to brown and dull red against the glow, and there's a girl's scarlet hat and an emerald green signboard—choice of tints and no mistake—we will take



the lot for a first illustration, and in London perhaps, we will get another street scene or two, and so on ; as we go south and east we will pick up pictures along the road—from Edinburgh to Mandalay with coloured pictures all the way, notes of the outside of things only, no inner meanings guaranteed—the reflections on the shop windows as it were—anyone can see the things inside.

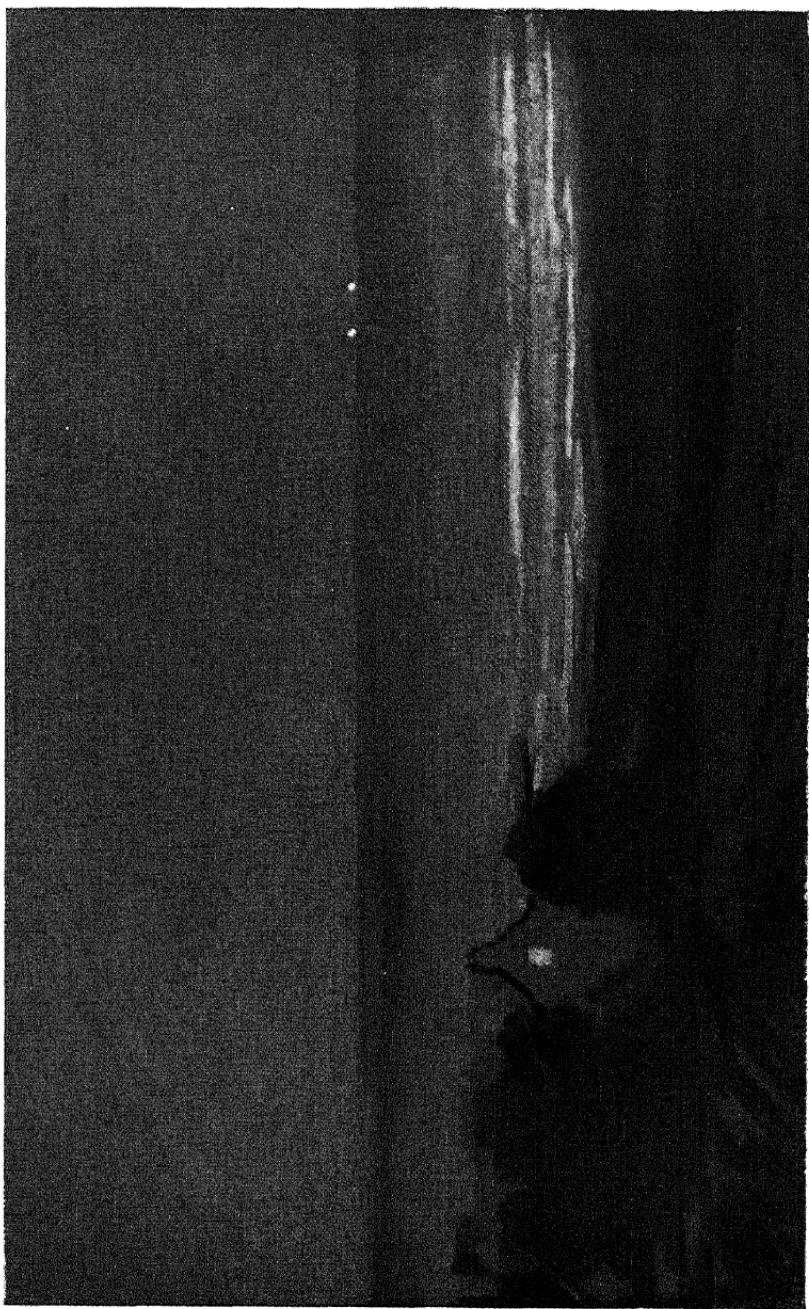
An old friend met us at the station ; he had just heard of our exodus and came to wish us good-bye as we used to do in school-days, when we considered a journey to England was rather an event. He spoke of "Tigers ;" India and tigers are bracketed in his mind, and I am certain he would get tiger-shooting somehow or other if he were to go East ; he looked a little surprised and sad

when I affirmed that I went rather to paint and see things than to shoot. Shooting and other sports we can have at home, and after all, is not trying to see things and depict them the most exciting form of sport? I am sure it is as interesting; and that more skill and quickness of hand and eye is required to catch with brush or pen point a flying impression from a cab window or the train than in potting stripes in a jungle.

Look you—this I call sport! To catch this nocturne in the train, the exact tint of the blue-black night, framed in the window of our lamp-lit carriage; or the soft night effect on field and cliff and sea as we pass. No academical pot shot this, for we are swinging south down the east coast past Cockburnspath (Coppath, the natives call it) at sixty miles the hour, so we must be quick to get any part of the night firmly impressed. There is faint moonlight through low clouds (the night for flighting duck), the land blurred, and you can hardly see the farmer's handiwork on the stubbles; there are trees and a homestead massed in shadow, with a lamp-lit window, lemon yellow against the calm lead-coloured sea, and a soft broad band of white shows straight down the coast where the surf tumbles, each breaker catches a touch of silvery moonlight. The foam looks soft as wool, but I know two nights ago, an iron ship was torn to bits on the red rocks it covers. . . . I must get this down in colour tomorrow in my attic under the tiles of the Coburg. Who knows—some day it may be worth a tiger's skin (with the frame included). . . . There is the light now on the Farnes, and Holy Island we can dimly make out.

To the right we look to see if the bison at Haggerston are showing their great heads above the low mists on the fields. . . . The night is cold, there is the first touch of winter in the air. It is time to knock out my pipe and turn in, to dream of India's coral strand, as we roll away south across the level fields of England. . . .

In London town we arrive very early; an early Sunday



morning in autumn in the East of London is not the most delightful time to be there. It is smelly and sordid, and the streets are almost empty of people, but I notice two tall young men in rags, beating up either side of a street, their hands deep in their pockets as if they were cold ; they are looking for cigarette ends, I expect, and scraps of food ; and we are driving along very comfortably to our hotel and breakfast. An hour or two later we are in the park at church-parade ; a little pale sun comes through the smoky air, and a chilly breeze brings the yellow leaves streaming to the ground. There are gorgeous hats on the lines of sparrows nests, and manifold draperies and corduroys and ermines and purple things, with presumably good-looking women inside. We men run to purple ties this year, quite a plucky contrast to our regulation toppers, black coats and sober tweed trousers. And one unto the other says, "Hillo--you here again ! Who'd have expected to see you, dear fellow ! What sort of bag did you get ; good sport, eh ?" "Oh, good—good—awfully good ! Such a good year all round, you know, and partridges, they say, are splendid ; hasn't been such a good season for years ; awfully sorry to miss 'em. And when do you go back ?—On the *Egypt* !—Oh, by Jove ! won't there be a crowd ! Horrid bore, you know—'pon my word everyone is goin' East now ; you can't get away from people anywhere ! It's the Prince's visit you know ; what I mean is, it's such a draw, don't you know."

Monday morning in Regent Street.—Sauntering with St C., looking at the crowd and incubators and buying things we could probably get just as well in Bombay ; but Indian ink and colours, and these really important things we dare not leave behind. What a pleasant street it is to saunter in once or twice in a year or so ; what a variety of nationalities and pretty faces there are to see. The air is fresh and autumnal, and overhead a northerly breeze blows wisps of white cloud across a bright blue sky, and just floats out the French Tricolours and the Union Jacks

with which the street is decorated. The houses on one side are in quite hot sun ; the other side of the street is in cold bluey shade, which extends more than half across the road. A cart crawls up the shaded side, leaving a track of yellow sand in its wake ; someone is coming, and the crowd waits patiently. . . . Now mounted police appear in the distant haze and come trotting towards us, and the guards with glittering breastplates are rattling past and away in a breath ! Then outriders and a carriage, and a brown face, moustached and bearded, and the Prince goes by, and the crowd cheers—and I pray we may both get a tiger. Then the King passes with Lord Minto, I think. We have come to London for something !

Possibly in the fulness of time we may see kings in our Northern Capital oftener than we do now. We need ceremonies, a little sand on the street occasionally, and a parade or two—ceremonies are the expression of inward feelings ; without occasion for the expression of the sentiment of loyalty, the sense must go . . . the loyalty of a second northern people—going—going—for a little sand and bunting—and—NO OFFER ?

There is no chance of ennui in the week in London before a voyage ; you have packing, shopping, insuring, and buying tickets and general bustling round—what charming occupations for the contemplative mind ! Then you throw in visits to friends, and acquaintances call on you, all in the concentrated week ; you breakfast late, lunch heavily, rush off to a hurried dinner somewhere, then rush off to a play or some function or other, supper somewhere else and then home, too late for half a pipe ; engagements about clothes, hats, dresses, guns, lunches, dinners, theatres, you have all in your mind, awake and asleep, and as you run about attending to essentials and superfluities, you jostle with the collarless man in the street, and note the hungry look, and reflect how thin is the ice that bears you and how easy it is to go through, just a step, and you are over the neck—collar gone and

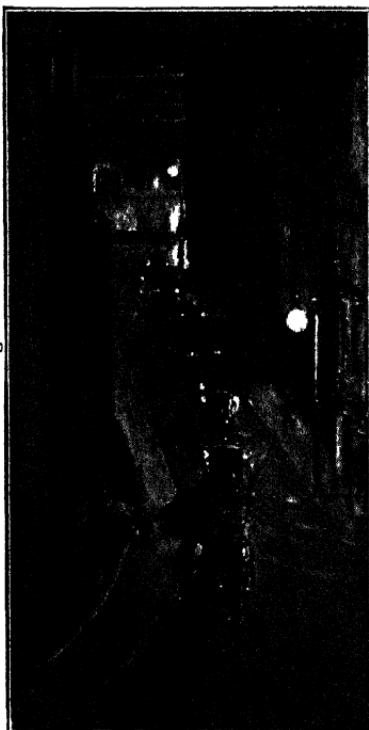
the crease out of the trousers. A friend of mine went through the other day and no one knew ; he lived on brown bread and water for ever so long, but stuck to his evening clothes, and now he sits in the seats of the

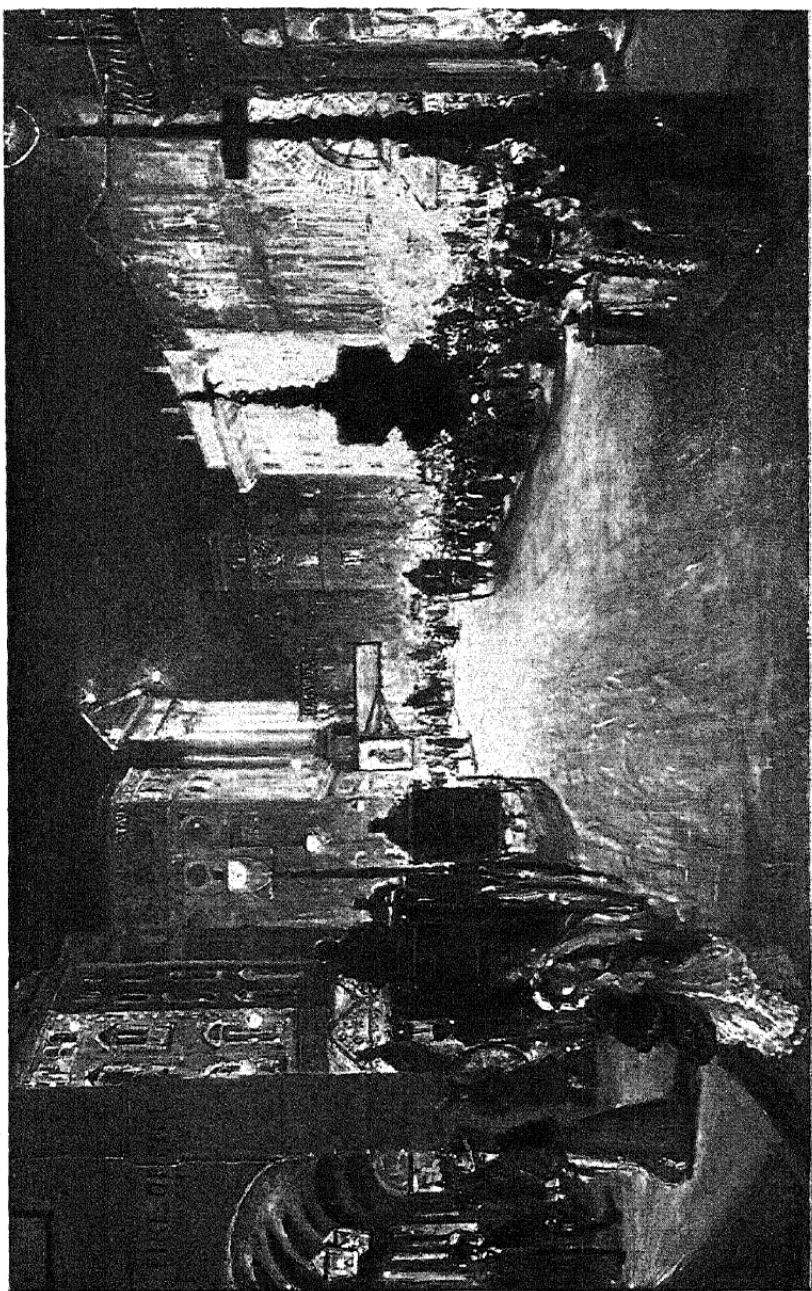


mighty. What "a Variorem" it all is—tragedy and comedy written in the lines of faces and the cut of clothes. But I confess ; what interests me in London more than types or individuals, are the street scenes and figures seen collectively. What pictures there are at every turning, and yet how seldom we see them painted. With the utmost modesty in the world I will have a try in passing at Piccadilly Circus. Is there a street scene so fascinating as that centre for colour and movement ?—say on a May night, with people going to the theatres, the sky steely blue and ruddy over the house-tops, the Pavilion and Criterion lights orange and green glinting on the polished road and flickering on the flying hansom wheels—or The

Circus in a wet night, a whirlpool of moving lights and shadows and wavering reflections ! What a contrast to the quiet effects in some side street ; for example this street seen half in moonlight, beneath my window in the Coburg ; the only sound the click clack of the busy horse's feet on the wood pavement, as hansoms and carriages flit round from Berkeley Square—there's a levee to night, and their yellow lamps string up Mount Street and divide beneath me into Carlos Place.

. . . My tailor has sent me such an excellent cardboard box to paint on, so I will use it for this effect in Muzii colours ; it will make a drop scene or tail piece to this first chapter of these "Digressions."





CHAPTER II

LONDON TO TILBURY.—If I am to write notes about¹ a journey to the Far East, I must not miss out the exciting part between Grosvenor Square and Liverpool Street Station. The excitement comes in as you watch the policeman's hand at the block in the city and wonder if it will stop your journey; down it comes though, and we are in time, and have a minute to spare to rejoice on the platform with our cousin and niece who are going out with us, or rather with whom we home people are going out to India.

There were those on the platform not so happy as we were; an old lady I saw held the hand of a young soldier in pathetic silence, and the smiles on the faces of those left at home were not particularly cheerful, and the grey set expression of men leaving wives and children is hard to forget. A younger lady I saw on the platform smiling, and straight as a soldier, threw herself into her sister's arms as the train moved off in a perfect abandonment of grief, and the wrinkles in the old lady's face as we passed were full of tears—two to one against her seeing the young man, son, or grandson, on this side. But I suppose that is India all over—many partings, a few tears shed, and enough kept back to float a fleet.

Our 'guid brither'¹ and his wife have come in the train with us to Tilbury to see us on board, so we are all very jolly and the sun shines bright on the river and white cumulous clouds, and the brown sails of the barges are swelling with a brisk north-east breeze as they come

¹ Brother-in-law.

up on the top of the flood. The "Egypt" lies in mid-stream, and all the passengers of our train go off to it in tenders, along with hundreds of friends who have come to see them off—there is a crowd! Passengers only bring hand baggage with them, the rest went on board yesterday; the embarkation is beautifully managed and orderly, there is an astonishing repression of excitement and show of out of place feeling. To compare this embarkation with that on a foreign liner; I have seen the whole business of taking passengers and luggage on board an Italian liner stopped for minutes by one Egyptian with a tin of milk on the gangway, holding forth on his grievances to the world at large, whilst handsome officers on deck smiled futilely, their white-gloved hands behind their backs. I suppose it is this military precision that gives the P. & O. their name and their passengers a sense of security; but there are people so hard to please that they ask for less pipeclay, less crowded cabins, and better service and more deck space, and these carpers will never be content, so long as they see other lines, such as the Japanese, giving all they clamour for, comfortable bath-rooms, beds, and a laundry at moderate rates.

A touch of militarism that I rather fancy on the P. & O. is the bugle call going round the ship before meals; it is such a jolly cheery sound to awaken to. It comes from far along the ship in the morning, at first faintly in the distance, when you are half-awake trying to account for the faint sound of machinery and the running reflections on your white roof, dimly conscious of the ever delightful feeling that you are sailing south across the widest and most level of all plains. Louder and louder it comes along the alley-way, till outside your cabin door it fairly makes you jump! A jolly, cheery sound it is, almost nothing in the world so stirring excepting the pipes. There's a laughing brazen defiance in it, and gentleness too, as it dies away—most masculine

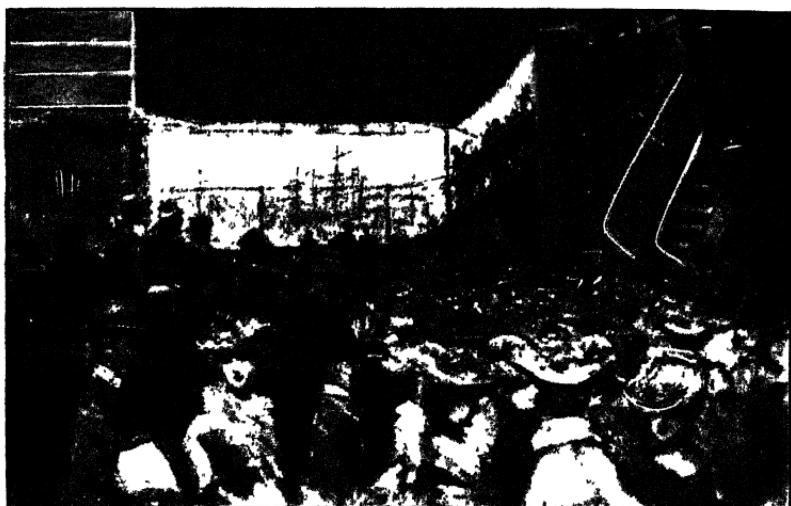
music! What associations it must have for soldiers; even to the man of peace it suggests plate armour, the listed field and battles long ago. . . . Did you ever hear it in Edinburgh? up in the empty, windy castle esplanade—empty of all but memories—You see no bugler, but the wide grey walls and sky are filled with its golden notes. It echoes for a moment, and then there is quietness, till the noise of the town comes up again. And at night have you heard it? from the *Far Side* of Princes Street, the ethereal notes between you and the stars, long drawn notes of the last post, from an invisible bugler in the loom of the rock and the rolling clouds.

G. murmurs, "It is abominable—but after all, going to sea is all a matter of endurance." What a difference there is in the point of view—G., I must say, had a hair mattress last night, and it was not properly blanketed and entailed a certain amount of endurance; on the other hand she is extremely fortunate in having such glorious pink roses and beautiful hangings for nicknacks, touching parting gifts from friends, so her cabin already looks fairly homely; and then, on the walls, there is the most perfect round picture, framed in the bright brass of the porthole—a sailing ship hull down on the horizon, her sails shining like gold in the morning sun, on a sea of mother of pearl. . . . There is just the faintest rise and fall, and the air is full of the steady silky rushing sound; what is there like it, which you hear in fine weather when the sea makes way to let you pass.

Painted at a sketch to-day of people coming on board the "Egypt" from the tender, no great thing in colour, less in a black and white reproduction, for eye and hand were a little taken up with luggage—a note of lascars in blue dungarees and red turbans—East meeting West—the ladies in mauve and lilac hats and white veils; for shades of purple are all the fashion this year.

I have found a corner in the waist between first and

second class, where one can draw or paint without being very much overlooked; you can get under the sky there, elsewhere you can't, and only see the horizon, for our first class deck is under the officers' deck, and the second class



is covered with awnings, a very poor arrangement I think for you only get light on your toes. A sailing ship's deck is ever so much nicer, for you have a reasonable bulwark to keep wind and water off your body instead of an open rail. You can look over a bulwark comfortably, your eyes sheltered from the glare off the sea; on these steam-liners it comes slanting up to your eyes under eyebrows and eyelashes—no wonder people take to blue spectacles! In the sailing ship too you can look up and watch the bends of white canvas and the spars and cordage swinging to and fro across the infinite blue, an endless delight! Here you have a floor and blistered paint a few inches above you, on which you know the officers promenade with the full sweep of the horizon round them and the arc of the sky above. Still another advantage of the sailing ship is, that you are not just one of a crowd, ticketed No.

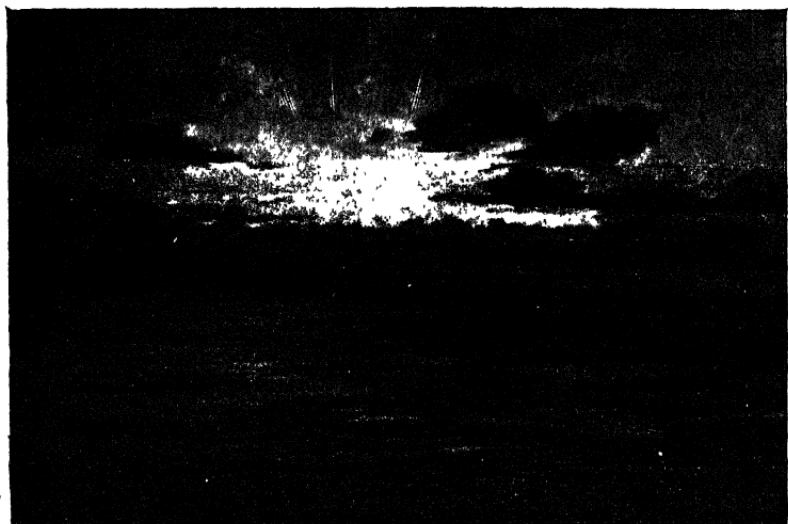
so and so, bedded, fed, and checked off by a numeral ; and you can generally count on a barometer, and learn the names of lights and lands you pass ; possibly there may even be a thermometer, and certainly a compass. On this " Egypt," barring a small scale Mercator's projection of the world on which the ship's position is marked daily, there is no means of getting the information that can make a sea voyage so infinitely interesting. I would suggest large sized charts showing landmarks, ship's position, and barometrical readings. What is more interesting at sea than the charts of ocean depths, currents, winds, salinity, and temperature ! If you go too fast to touch on Plankton, Nekton, and Benthos, at least let the poor first class passengers have a compass, if not a barograph and a thermometer, to eke out conversations on the weather, the day's run, and bridge.

"THE BAY"—the Great Bay, calm as a mill pond—there's a jolly sense of rest and peace on board ; I suppose everyone knows that feeling who has gone East. For weeks you have been doing things, shopping, packing, keeping appointments, then you get out of the bustle of town, breathe again clear air, and rest, on the level sea, that lovely water cushion, the most soothing of all beds.

Everyone is soporific and very restful. We begin to distinguish individuals amongst the many passengers, but so far no one seems particularly conspicuous. They are rather good-looking as a crowd, and one or two children are like angels—at least we hope so.

It is darker ahead now and to the east, the shadow of the World on Nothing, I suppose ! possibly an October breeze coming—low banks of cirri-cumuli above the horizon—clear overhead with streaks of rusty red cloud fine as hair—the evening is cold, here is an attempt at it with a brush. And we had music in the place for music on deck ; an Irish lady played the fiddle and played so well with a piano accompaniment to an audience of six—if

the Bay keeps quite the audience ought to increase. After



the sunset, dinner—what a tedious business it is ; the waiting is perfectly planned, but the waiters themselves have to wait ages at the two service hatches, where they get all jammed together, so the time between the courses seems interminable ; you almost forget you are at a meal at all. To-night dinner and conversation both hang fire at our end of the table, and I overhear from the other end where my cousin sits interesting scraps about India, which is distinctly annoying ; R. is relating some of his experiences there that set his neighbours and my neice and Mrs Deputy-Commissioner all chuckling.

I gather that R. converted a certain Swiss. They lived near each other, a lonely life on the "Black Cotton Soil," whatever that is. R. says it blows about like snow. The Swiss lived in a little corrugated-iron house with some hens, and no books, and he loved books, and hated his house and hens, and the British Empire. R. had a nice bungalow and lots of books, and he lent these to the Swiss, on condition that he would read our newspapers !

with the result that the Swiss ceased to believe in British “methods of barbarism,” said he admired the Empire, and got quite to like his tin house and the black soil,—even his hens!

It is so quiet in the smoking-room to-night—not even bridge going on yet, which perhaps accounts for the discursiveness of these rambling notes on a quiet Saturday night at sea.

Now comes Sunday. “Come day go day, God send Sunday,” as the discontented sailor growls before the mast. The day of the month unknown—I do not think it matters, in such notes as these, dates are rather like ruled lines on sketching paper, only distracting. . . . We have had such a pleasant time so far, that a Presbyterian lady was quite surprised when at breakfast I told her the day of the week, as she had not heard any clanging and clashing of bells, and as everybody seemed quite cheerful and there were no black clothes, she could not realise it was Sunday. But this afternoon it is not joyful for all! There is a solemn grey sky sweeping over us from Spain, with a grandeur and breadth that one only associates with Spanish skies, and there is a fresh breeze, but warm from the land, and this big tub moves a little, enough to make one realise the Sea is alive, her bosom heaves us along slightly, a delightful motion for some of us, and intensely soothing, but alas! there are empty places at our board. What a penance it is this sea-sickness. In the words of Burns,

“It is a dizziness,
That will not let a body gang
About his business”

at all, at all. . . . I was a pale-faced student, a week out from Leith to Antwerp, when I first felt this rudeness: we struck a fog-bank off St. Abb’s Head to begin with, and a sand-bank off Middlesborough, and listened there to the cocks crowing on shore without seeing a foot ahead for the thickness of the grey, wet mist. We cheered ourselves with bag-

pipes, and the captain had a case of the very best brandy, the first I think I ever tasted ; and he could play some tunes on the practise chanter. "Dinna think bonnie lassie, I'm goin' to leave you," I remember was his best ; it is a strathspey tune ; I learned it from him. The trouble came when it blew up hard off the Scheldt ; but even when coming over the bar, the "romance" of the sea qualified its pains a little. I can feel the cold in my hands to-day of the barrels of the Winchesters at the side of the couch, and to which I clung in my hour of trial, and remembered they had been used in the steamer's very last trip against *Real Pirates* in the China Seas ! And certainly there was the "romance" of the sea in the change from the gale and black night outside the bar, to the quiet morning on the wide river with the cathedral spire, violet against the sunrise, dropping its silvery music "from heaven like dew ;" "Madame Angot," was the tune I think, with a note missing here and there.

We saw a number of sea birds to-day, and two at least were skuas, black looking thieves among their white cousins. I saw one try to make a gull disgorge, driving up at it from below, to the gull's loudly-expressed disgust. It is a strange arrangement of nature, and I can't understand why a few gulls don't combine to defend themselves. I am sure each of them must hate to give up the little meal they have earned with so much tiring flight. There were shore birds too ; we shipped some as passengers, they were going south like ourselves, but by instinct not by the card. I suppose they were on the road all right, and just needed to rest their wings a little ; two large black birds were on the bridge last night, possibly crows, and we have starlings to-day, and I saw some finches of sorts. At least one of these fragile boarders was eaten by the ship's cat—I found its delicate remains, a few tiny feathers and a dainty wing and its poor head.

The land is very faint on the horizon and the breeze

is just going down, such as it was ; it's a momentary interest at the end of a somewhat dull, grey day to most passengers.

R. and his wife, since one a.m., have had rather a poor time ; their cabin is far forward, and so they feel any motion more than we do amidships ; what with a little sea-sickness and the anchor chain loose in its pipe, banging against their bunks, they had a disturbed night. We raked out the bo'sun from his afternoon nap, and he and a withered old lascar jammed a hemp fender between the chain and woodwork, so their slumbers ought to be more peaceful ; now they are getting a temporary change to a berth amidship, which is unoccupied as far as Marseilles ; in it they will hardly feel the motion.

It was really considerate of the captain making a break in a dull, damp Sunday afternoon—the horn went booming, and up we all jumped in the smoking-room with some idea that someone had gone overboard, and up on deck came the lascars grinning, a jolly string of colour, and away forward they trotted and climbed into the forward life-boats from the deck above us. It was very smartly done, but I would like to have seen if their feet could reach the stretchers or their hands the oars ; the boats were not swung out, but everything seemed ready. I think my friend the bo'sun must have had an inkling they were needed for he was working about the davits and falls earlier in the afternoon. In the words of the poet, Gilbert,

“ It is little I know,
Of the ways of men of the sea,
But I'll eat my hand if I (don't) understand ”

this part of their business ; practice on a whaler tends to perfection at getting away in the boats, and at getting on board again too, if you are hungry—and faith if it isn't snowing it is fun !

To night the air is damp and warm from the S.E., and we smell Spain—true bill—several of us noticed the aromatic smell. Scents at sea carry great distances.

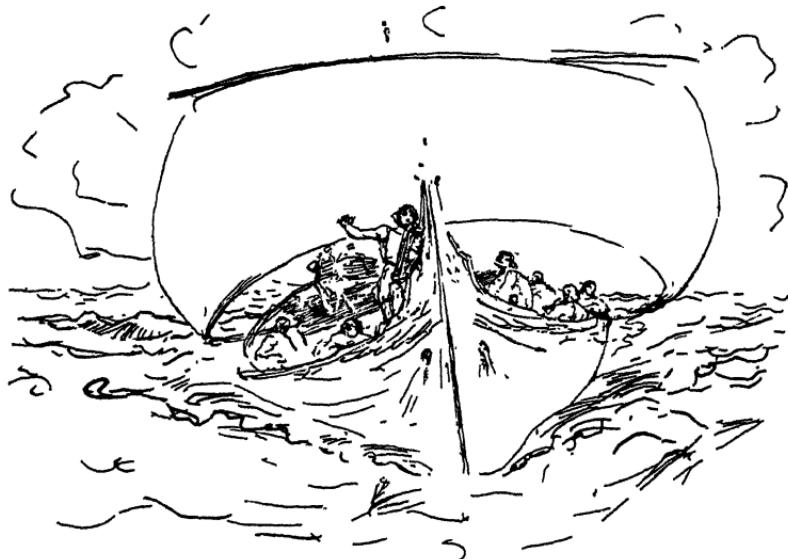
“I know a man” who smelt burning wood or heather, 250 nautical miles from land, and said so and was laughed at; but he laughed last, for two or three days after his vessel beat up to some islands, from which towered a vast column of brown and white smoke from burning peat, and this floated south on a frosty northerly breeze, and the chart showed the smoke was dead to windward at the time he spoke.

CHAPTER III

MONDAY — a rolling tumbling sea, soft grey and white, and misty-wet decks with shimmering reflections—a day when even a great liner such as this feels a little shut off from the outside world, for the mist comes down on the edge of the horizon and hedges us in. If I ever paint Orpheus or the Sirens, I will use such a grey wet effect. I think of these old navigators in their small vessels, getting the thick and the thin, just as we do to-day in our own sailing craft ; getting well dusted at times, with the salt thick on their cheeks and decks Taking it all round, the sea is rather a minor chord ; so that these Burlington House pictures of the Argo and The Heroes, in orange and rose on a wine-red sea are not convincing. When my patron comes home I will humbly suggest Orpheus singing at the stem, a following wind, a great bellying sail behind, and all around wet air and splashing grey sea, the stem ploughing it up silver and white and green, and away aft under the bend of the sail there would be Jason and the steersman, possibly Medea, with the curl out of her hair, and perhaps just a touch of the golden fleece, just a fleck of pale yellow to enliven the minor tints ! Round the bows there would be men listening to the song, watching the stem pound into the green hollows—now, I remember ! I have seen this—I'd forgotten. But the Orpheus was in faded blue dungarees, and played a fiddle, and leaned against a rusty, red capstan—saw it from the jib-boom of the Mjolna¹—fishing bonita—looked back, and there they all were, the same to-

¹ Norse for Thors hammer.

day as they were in olden days, I expect, men and boys, salt and sun-bitten sea-farers, lolling on the cat-heads and anchors. A joy of the World, that is—from your perch out on the jib-boom to watch a ship with its cloud of white sails surging after you.



The Sirens too would paint in this weather ; they look quite dry in pictures, they would look better wet—I'd have them glittering wet and joyous, and a fit carvel built boat and crew, and brown sloping sails, three reefs down, making a fine passage clear on to them, just as the steersman might wish with no bindings or wax in ears at all, but all at the Sirens' service.

St Vincent light is now in sight—the swell from the south-west, and our course, as far as a passenger may guess, will soon be south by east ; so we ought to have a fair roll on soon, and I feel glad our sea-sick friends are mostly asleep. To-morrow we hope to be in early at Gibraltar, then they "will have a rest—it will be all smooth sailing. "They say so—and they hope so," as the "Old Horse" Chantie puts it. Is there not a wind, however,

called the Mistral, in the Gulf of Lyons, and a Euro-clydon further east, mentioned by St Paul?

We passed some rather interesting land scenery this afternoon, before we came to the mouth of the Tagus; you could see houses, comfortably nestled up the sides of the hills. At the foot of the red cliffs there is a line of green water and white bursts of foam—made a pochade of a bit of this coast—a castle perched on blue peaks, a rolling sky and rugged mountains, and nearer, a rolling, leaden-coloured swell.

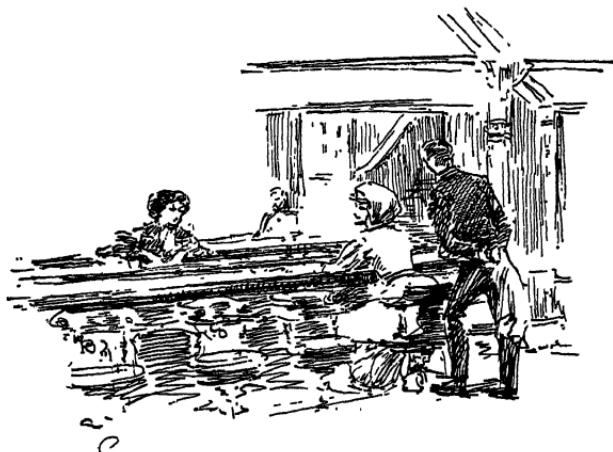


From the well or waist where I paint, I noticed a rather black, white-man stood and watched me out of the engine room. He looked interested, and I spoke to him later. He said he "did a bit" himself in unmistakeable West Country accent, and he took me to his cabin to show me his art work. Though not very high up in the working part of this show—boiler maker or artificer, I think, he had a very nice cabin. His art work was decorative. He applied various cigar and tobacco labels with gum to Eastern wine jars of unmistakeably Greek design, also Masonic, and P.

& O. symbols, with crosses, and rising suns in red and gold ; the interspaces of these geometric designs he filled up with blue and gold enamel paint, and the general effect was very bright. It was odd though to see a vase of historic shape done over with such brand new labels. He had done this work for some years in spare time, so he had acquired considerable proficiency.

I would fain be able to describe some of the human interest, on such a vessel as this ; there is enough for many novelists to study for many a day. Of each class at home we know individuals, soldiers and civilians, and their women folk, and they are interesting as others or more so ; but when you see them like this on board their ship in their numbers, going East to their various duties, the interest becomes quite a big thing. There is the girl going to her future husband in a native regiment, not to return for years, and there is a couple sitting beside us to-night in the smoking-room—a white-haired Colonel and his young protégé, a budding soldier—they talk of mother at home, and cousins and aunts. Then there's The-most-beautiful-girl-in-the-ship, but she is not typical, and I think she goes farther East than India : she has chummed already with the best set-up man on board, so that's as it should be—and what an occasion it is for chumming ! I'd like to know what is the average number of engagements made and broken on these P. & O.'s per voyage. R. tells me of one made in his last trip home ; I forget on what line. The passengers were eleven young men and one lady, and she favoured one of them, so there were ten disappointed suitors. They found He and She could sing a little, so one of the ten played accompaniments, and the others encouraged the devoted pair to sing tender ditties, which they did and for all they were worth. He sang, "I want you, my Honey," and put his back into it, as R. says, very slangily I think, and the suitors thought they had great subject for much mirth when they retired to the smoking-room—I think it was

almost profane. But it is time for one pipe on deck and a last look at the somewhat uncongenial sea, then to a bed, three or four inches too narrow.



These two ladies here depicted are the sole survivors of their sex this morning at breakfast, for it blows hard outside; but it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, so these two young things, fresh as roses, made each other's acquaintance at the empty table. They have been an hour on deck, and like the movement, and the breakfast; and possibly their irrepressible joyous sense of superiority is flavoured with pity for their sisters lying low and pale. You see, the fiddles are on the table, and even with these you have to hang on to your cup occasionally. The fiddle makes such a comfortable rest for my elbows, so I scribble this on the back of the breakfast menu (no one wants it) without being seen. I remember that neither the position nor the occupation were allowed in the nursery, and I hear of people to-day in quite good society so dead to art that they will not allow you to draw on the table cloth! I sometimes think how many lovely ideas must have been lost by this! It was the Correggio brothers, was it not? who used to draw during meal-

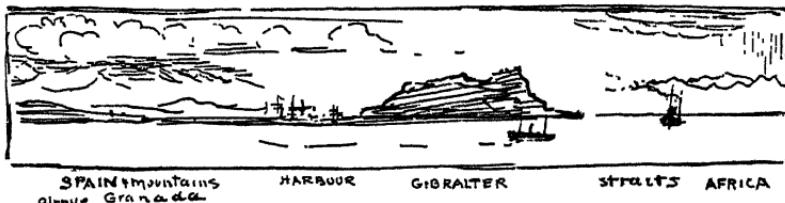
time ; they were very enthusiastic, but they died—possibly of indigestion !

We are getting into the Straits of Gibraltar—a nice blustery day, the black tramps coming out of the Mediterranean bury their noses deep in foam, and roll up and show all the beauty of steamers' lines ! To starboard we get a glimpse of the serrated African mountains above Tangiers and the Atlas Mountains beyond. They are green in spring, but now they are brown. I used to think the African Coast was flat and sandy ; I wonder if school boys do so still. It is a pleasant surprise at first sight to find it so like our own mountainous country. Both the African hills and the Spanish hills are veiled at times with passing rain columns that sweep in from the Atlantic.

Here is a little finger-nail jotting of Gibraltar ; you see the parts where the masts are—that is the harbour. The Rock or Mountain, 1,200 feet high, is to the south and right ; all its side is bristling with guns ; to the left of the ships a long spit of land joins the rock to Spain proper. If the cumulous clouds to the north and east, in the direction of Granada, would lift a little we would see the white tops of the Sierra Nevada.

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This has been a most splendid day ! We have been on Spanish soil—I suppose I may call it Spanish soil though



it is held by Britain—have seen fair Spanish women, had sun, wind, rain, wet decks, and dry decks, and the bustle and interest of dropping anchor in Port, with all the movement of tugs and boats and people going and coming to and from shore—the roadstead blustery and fluttering

with flags, and everything afloat bobbing and moving, excepting the great grey men-of-war.

We got away in the first shore boat. How it rained—G.'s hat ruined—but anything to be in Spain once more. The launch rolls and umbrellas drip, and we have hundreds of yards along splashing wet pier, G. balancing on timbers and wire cables to keep a little out of the mud—one umbrella for the two. Then a jog up the town in a funny little victoria with yellow oiled canvas curtains, past little gardens with great red flowers on one tree, and trumpet-shaped white flowers hanging on the next, past soldiers in khaki, and turbaned Moors huddled in their draperies. The Moors look so out of place in Europe; they seem to have aimed at being picturesque and have failed, and know it and stick to it. The Spaniards you pass are pure joy to the artist; the women have such nice ivory colouring with the faintest tint of pink, and such eyes, brown and dark, and kind, and such eye-lashes—it's easy colour to paint too in Henner's way, Prussian blue, bitumen and ochre and a breath of rose! Look at the bloom on their hair, blue as the light on raven's wing, and the flour on their faces, hanging thick on their black eyebrows. I think they must have a little of the Indian in them. There's a far-away kinship in the expression of the Ayahs on board and the Spaniards on shore, a queer penetrating look, and kindly. The mens' expressions are also pleasant enough, I think—very quiet—but they have your eye and your measure before you realise, with a glance quick as the glint that a pointer gives you from the corner of his eye as he ranges past. . . . Here is a jotting of one of the natives, perhaps a little heavy in expression, but fairly typical Spanish face. She is my cousin's cook; he is an R. E. and lives in quite a big house for Gibraltar; you can stand upright in any room and stretch yourself in the drawing-room, which has a balcony; I painted her as she stood in it. My cousin's wife had discharged her, but there was no ill-feeling, so she came to pay a complimentary call,

in black lace mantilla and pink blouse. She was called Barbara, and loved a baker over the way, and when she should have been regarding the soup, she was throwing glances to the baker in his shop, so she had to go ! " Poor Barbara "—and lucky baker, to receive such cordite glances !

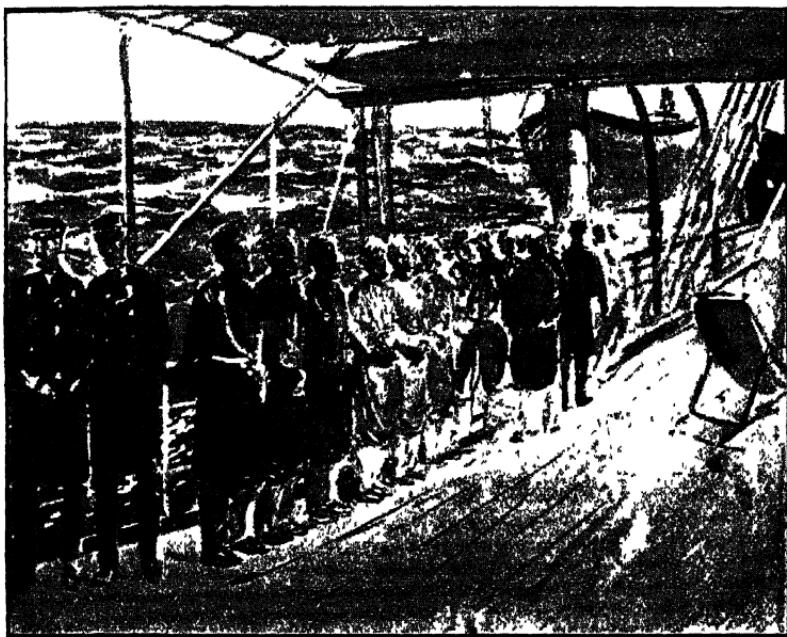
A dainty lady of Saxon type, with face like china, hair fine gold, and eyes of Neapolitan violet, looked over my shoulder whilst I sketched. She is just out, and is enjoying Gibraltar hugely. But I should not have said violet eyes, for one was black as a thunder-cloud ; she hunted yesterday and got dragged poor thing, and was bruised all over, but she was going about and hunts again in two or three days.



Gib 2

ARM

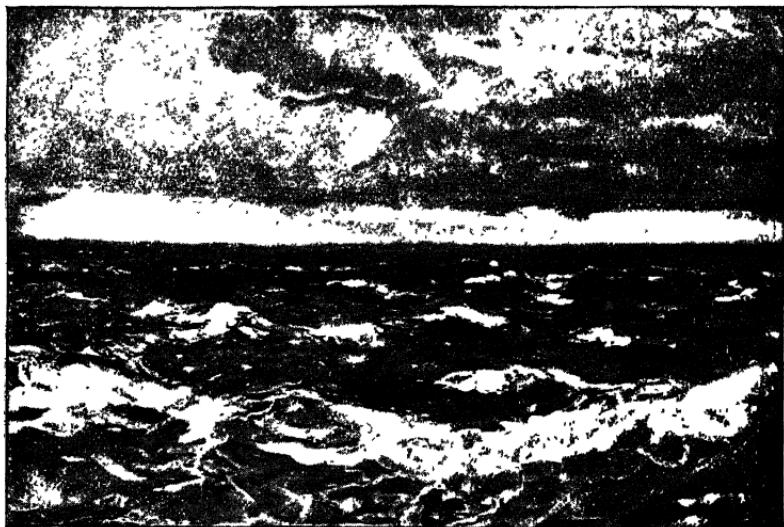
CHAPTER IV



Sunday parade of Lascars.

OUR first day with a blue sky at sea—my word it is blue, impossibly blue, and the sun is beaming! We have had a quiet night, so everyone is very contented. On our left the Spanish coast is very mountainous, and little cloudlets are throwing shadows over the mountain sides. G. and I study our Spanish grammar; but perhaps “study” is hardly the word, dream over it would be more exact, and wonder at the blueness of the sea and the blue reflected lights on the hurricane deck above us. We have managed to get our chairs into a patch of sun; we rather court its rays just now, by the time we come home again I daresay we will take the shady side of the street. So

pretended to get courses of dinner, and then went and stood at their tables whilst the two pursers and head steward went round the whole of them, patiently asking each separately his duties: "What have you to do?" and each man answered as well as he could, and corrections were made. This inspection took fully an hour, then they went through the coffee, cream, and sugar and tea drill. All this dinner and fire drill is very thorough, I must admit, and the management of a big crowd of people on a ship begins to impress me—but the tea—is horrid!



We are now going north-east towards Marseilles. The sun shines, and it blows a gentle half gale. The sea is blue where it isn't white, and the wind is strong enough to keep us lying steadily over to starboard, decks of course all wet, with rainbows at the bow, and bursting spray over all occasionally—people rather subdued, only a small muster at breakfast.

Place aux dames! I forgot to mention that a very beautiful French lady came on board at Gibraltar; she looked like one of Van Beers' pictures as she came down

the quay steps in a most exquisite dress, dreamlike petticoats, and open-work stockings on Diana's extremities, and she had a little parasol, and held her skirts high—a Frenchwoman hates mud—and the rain poured, in sheets! She gave a brave farewell to her friends and fiancé, and came on board with an air, notwithstanding the drenching rain. She was beautiful—hair like night, eyes brown, and features most perfectly Greek, and white as marble with a rose reflected on it! A doctor beside me whispered “anæmic,” the red-haired ass! She leaves us at Marseilles, and will never travel by sea again. G. befriended her and interpreted for her; she was so helpless and alone in a cabin meant for three, with a pile of boxes miles bigger than the regulation size. With feminine courage she fought sea-sickness, fainted in the barber's chair, but appeared at dinner in another most exquisite toilet, and then—even in the paroxysm of sickness, preserved perfect grace of movement of hand and eye and draperies! What heroic courage! But enough of the tea rose in our bean field;



let us get to more material things, and to Marseilles, and the coals rattling down the iron shoot beneath our heads as we try to sleep in air thick with coal dust.

This morning the racket is like nothing else in the world. It is a combination of the babel of the East and

West, of Europe and Africa. There are four groups of musicians alongside, harpists, singers and fiddlers, all within the ship's length on the quay, and others in boats alongside.

We have two gangways reaching to the wharf, where are hundreds of porters, ship waiters and stewards bringing vegetables on board, and ships officers and hundreds of newly arrived passengers, all talking more or less over the music, and passing to and fro across the gangways in the sun. The ship feels too full to move in now. The new arrivals look a little pale and tired after their overland journey by Paris, but we weather-worn people with The Bay behind us, enjoy the whole scene with the calm of experienced mariners! Behind the sunlit groups of passengers with their baggage, the dock labourers in the sheds pile grain sacks on to waggons, and strings of stout horses stand resting beside them. On the edge of the quay are flower girls in black, selling big bunches of violets, and a Strong-man in pink tights and sky-blue knickerbockers—a festive piece of colour taken with his two white chairs and bright carpet. He plays with silver balls and does balancing feats with his little girl, and puts his arms round her and strokes her hair after each turn, in a delicate appeal to the sympathies of passengers who lean over the rail and take it all in somewhat sleepily.

. . . The post has brought me an Orient-Pacific guide-book which I wish I had had coming down channel and along the Portuguese coast. I would recommend it to anyone going this journey. It has a most interesting collection of facts both about sea and land on the route.

. . . We met the beautiful French lady again last night at the Hotel de Louvre, where everyone meets everyone else up town. I think she is Gascon, and the very opposite of the fair Saxon type we ought to admire at home. You hardly expect a perfectly beautiful woman to talk well, but this perfection could both talk and dress; her personality was not "sunk in her hat." She knew

Scottish history, all about the good Lord James, and about Mary Stuart, and what pleased us greatly was that she told us words and hummed the airs of children's songs reputed to have been written by Queen Mary, and which she said are sung to-day by French children. The Hotel de Louvre soon filled, so we got away from the crowd in a victoria and drove along the town to a café for supper, and it was cold and dark too !

The café, Basso and Bregaillon, has a "vue splendide" (in the daytime), so the bill says. What you see at night is a well lit quay with the café lights shining out across the dark water in the dock on to some white steam yachts. After getting rid of a uniformed interpreter, whose one idea was to give us an "Engleesh dinner, very good, very sheep," we made up our own order. Of course bouillabaisse et soupe de poissons was the first item. I am not sure how to eat this, with a spoon or fork—two dishes are set down at once, one with half an inch of saffron-coloured soup, made of, I think, shell-fish, and with great slices of bread in it—certainly a spoon is not very suitable ; the other dish has a perfect aquarium of little fish and bits of bigger fish beautifully arranged in a pyramid with similar soup round it—there are bits of red mullet, crab, green fish, and white fish, and all sorts of odds and ends. Why do we not make dishes like this at home ? I get just such oddities any time I lift my trammel net, but they are thrown away as "trash." But the French are artists in every line of life, in cooking, in dress, and I believe they put art into the way they heave the coal on board. We feel much inclined to stay here a little and see more of these Southern French. I love their jolly abandon of manner, their kindness and "honesty," and their gasconade. So here's to you Cyrano and Daudet, D'Artagnan and Tartarin, not forgetting M. le Président.

Who do you think sat beside us within arm's length but Réjane ! There were only six or seven people in the café, and none of them were aware of the presence of their

distinguished compatriot till we whispered her name to the waiter, and he whispered it to them and their eyes opened ! I came to G.'s side of the table so that I might see the great actress in mufti, and I would have liked to have made a sketch of her as she talked to her companion, but it would have been too obvious—you know the way she speaks, a little out of the corner of her eye and mouth, with hand on hip. She is great ! We saw her only a year ago with Coquelin in " *La Mantansier*."

This is the head of the Serang ; I took it when he was not looking. He runs the lascars on board ; acts pretty much as bo'sun. This face is brown and beard died rusty red, and he wears a lovely boatswains silver whistle on a silver chain, and has an air of command and the appearance of deepest intelligence.



CHAPTER V



HERE is a frightful crush on board. It would take years to consider all the faces. Numbers of ladies are going out to join their husbands after having taken their children home in spring. By the afternoon all the new comers look much refreshed ; they have washed off the travel stains of that dusty journey across France, have tidied up, eaten, and slept a little, and have perhaps met friends of the road. You hear,

“Hello—hello—you here again ! met in Simla last, didn’t we—wasn’t it cold last night ?” “By Jingo it was—rummy spell of cold—coming over all western Europe so suddenly,” and they talk of “Cold weathers,” and “Rains,” and “Monsoons,” and places you think you heard about in school days and have forgotten ; and you realise something of what there is ahead to learn.

Meantime I watch the lascars taking off the effect of the coaling last night ; how blue and sharp the reflections of the sky are on the wet deck and their dark feet. It is my business to paint things, not to write about them, still, both occupations dissipate the time wonderfully. They are scrubbing down the waist, washing the decks with brushes and squeejees and lashins of blue Mediterranean ; they wear dungaree tunics, and trousers of dark blue and faded pale blues, with red cloth round their straw skull-

caps, and are all in shadow—that colourful, melting, warm shade you have in the South in the afternoon.

27th Evening.—To what shall I liken this evening on deck? You know a railway carriage on Bank Holiday, and you have heard perhaps of a Newfoundland sealing ship, the crew head and tail and three deep in the bunks, and all about the deck and along the bulwarks for want of room—well, it's worse here, at the price! In the smoking-room there is not an inch to sit on; men lean against the pillars, others against the side of the bar or against each other. A few have got seats for bridge, others sit on sofas round the side, the rest have to stand. There were more passengers when we left Tilbury than allowed any free movement on deck; we made light of that. Now, people are jammed beside each other all the way up the side of the deck that is sheltered from the sweep of the wind, others sit on the rail; those who want to move have to pick a devious and careful course between the lines of chairs. And this is to be to-night, and to-morrow, till we get to India! And it will yet be worse than it is just now, for many passengers from Marseilles are still below, waiting for baths and arranging their crowded cabins.

I have to write letters and sketch on a dining-saloon table amongst waiters clearing dishes. There are four small tables on deck in what I think is called the music room, and they are fully occupied with ladies writing and bridge players, and round them every seat in the room is occupied. It is a crowd of people of the most gentle manners and breeding, or it would be horrible beyond words.

28th.—I suppose there were not more than fifty men in the smoking-room late last night when it became sufficiently empty to allow me to see separate faces. There were civilians, judges, and one or two men of business, but the majority were soldiers of middle age. I confess I am much impressed by the general type and the expression

of quiet strength and capability of these men of the Indian Services. They have finely modelled heads on powerful figures, better, I think, than any type of the ancients. Their manners are cheery and kindly, but always in repose the lines show strongly across the brow ; faces and lines seem to me to spell D-U-T-Y emphatically. For a *nouveau* it is difficult to follow their talk, it changes



so quickly from the man to his horse, to his seat and powers as cavalry leader or the like, perhaps to his family, his marriage, or his death, and whenever the family interest comes in, there is a note of genuine kindness as if brothers were telling or asking about other brothers and their wives and belongings. They speak rather quickly and cheerily, and then in repose the lines come again, not that they look over-worn ; on the contrary they look fit, tremendously and are very abstemious. One speaks near me—" You knew so and so ? Good horseman—wasn't he ? Curious seat—do you remember the way he rode with his toes out ? " " Yes, yes — ha, ha ! — it was funny ! He led a column with me at Abu Lassin. Very sad his death, poor fellow—

never got over the last war—heart always suffered—nice wife.” “Yes, yes—gave him pretty bad time though—oughtn’t to have married. Where is his boy—Sandhurst? No, he’s left—he’s coming out next month in a troop ship, I hear.” These are the older soldiers, and there are also many young officers, and two judges of the High Courts, one with nimble tongue and expression, the other the reverse. And there are business men with concentrated and perhaps rather narrower expressions than the others—Irish, Scots, and English. As they are all in the same black and white kit in the evening it is easier then to compare the various faces; in the daytime the variety of costume, flannels, and coloured ties and tweeds prevent one doing it so easily; I’d like to make a sketch of each, and superimpose these, and get the average, the type of the thousands who follow this road year after year.

. . . As usual, these Bayards, in dressing gowns of various cuts and colours, stood outside the bathrooms this morning and waited their turn, and if the atmosphere was not murky with swear words, it was not to the P. & O.’s credit. To most men tub time is the jolliest in the day; here it is one of evil temper, for after you have waited say twenty minutes in a passage for your chance, you get into a little wet steamy place over the engines, with possibly no port and poorly ventilated, and have your tub in a hurry for you know other fellows are waiting outside, and instead of gaily carolling your morning song you feel angry and cuss cusses, not loud, but profound as Tuscarora Deep. “Oh! Mummie, do come and see all the men waiting for their baths,” said a little angel this morning, as she pointed at the solemn row of bare-footed men holding on to their towels and sponge-bags and tempers—we actually grinned. Like some others I give up the attempt to get a morning tub, and trust to sneak one in during the day; better to have no bath than to start the day cross—“better to smash your damned clubs

than to lose your damned temper," as the golfer in a bunker was overheard muttering as he broke each club across his knee. The ladies, some hundreds, have I think five baths between them, and they wait for these a great part of the day. If you pass their waiting-room you get a glimpse of wonderful morning toilettes of every tint, muslins, laces, a black boy with red turbash bustling about to get the bath ready makes rather a good note of colour.

. . . . Notwithstanding all the above grievance we hadn't such a bad day yesterday ; it was calm and not too cold, with a soft pigeon grey sea and sky. . . . Put in a long day's painting in the corner of the after-well, and overhauling sketches done so far on the road—they are mounting up now, and I feel fortunate in having my apology for existence in such a handy shape as a paint box.

But how dull this log-writing becomes ! How on earth can I find an incident to pad up this journal ; what is there to write about in a route so monotonously first class ! Here is absolutely the most risque exciting story I have heard for days ; I must say the lady who told it has such an infectious laugh, that at the time I really thought it was very amusing.

You know the cabins on the P. & O. steamers are all exactly like each other, except the number above each door. So once upon a time she related, a certain lady tripped along to her cabin as she thought, to hurry up her husband for dinner and found him pulling on a shirt ; she plumped into a seat, saying, "John, John, you are always too late for dinner, and there's no use trying to struggle into your shirt with the studs fastened ?" Whereon the neck stud flew and revealed an astonished face—and it was not "John's." After lunch I told this to my barrister acquaintance ; he smiled gently and said he had always thought it such an amusing story.

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How I wish I was back at sea again on a whaler, with a swinging hammock, a tow net, and microscope, and opportunities any day to study the fairy beauties in drops of sea water, and with human interest too, so much more varied than on this P. & O. Hotel; there, would be all kinds of men, jolly, devil-may-care fellows, and even disreputable characters, mixed with canny, pawky, canting Scotties, and talk of all the corners of the world ; ranting rollicking Balzacian yarns, rich in language, in poetry, and tenderness ; any minute in the day amongst such people you might strike a yarn that would bear publication ; the picturesque interest of life does not seem to be on the high plains, or low levels, but as it were between wind and water, where plain meets mountain, the poor the rich, between happiness and sorrow, and light and shade ; and the fun of painting between one colour and the next. It is all very respectably drab here, and we talk of intellectual and proper things. For an hour to-day—no, two hours I am sure—I laboured at Indian sociology and history and Vedas and things, with the barrister, and I was tired ! The barrister knows many books on these subjects, and recommends me to read Sir W. W. Hunter's "History of India" in its abridged form of only 700 pages ; I suppose I must !—told my cousin I'd been trying to talk Indian sociology and he shouted : said he knew a man who had lived in India and studied the native life for twenty-eight years, and confessed he knew as little about it at the end as at the beginning ; but R. admitted that whenever he had a knotty question of native affairs to settle he always went to this man, and the decision was invariably right. R. has qualified admiration for the Indians honesty. Once, he said, he had to leave his house at a moment's notice, to take home a sick relation, and left all standing, and on coming back months after found every single stick of furniture just as he left it, and not a single article stolen, except one door-mat ; his night watchman had taken it with him to another situation, leaving

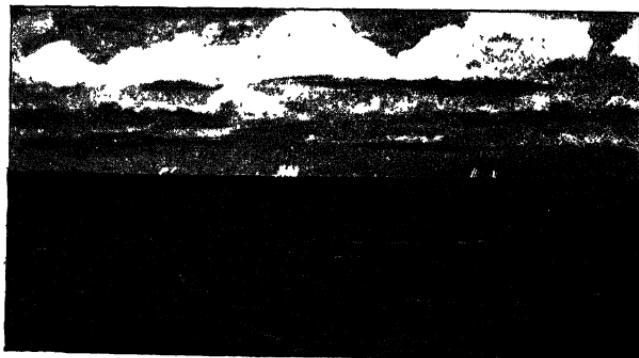
a humble message to the effect that he had got so accustomed to it that he couldn't sleep without it! Their honesty must run in grooves for R. gave a heavy overcoat to one of his men in a cold station, and when he and his servants went to a very hot station, he noticed this man still wearing the thick coat and sweating like anything, so



he asked him why he did so, and the man replied that he dared not put it off for a minute or it would be stolen.

We had quite an audience for the fiddles this Saturday—there are two lady violinists now, both very good players—but we had only a short spell of music in the music room on account of a choir practise, for to-morrow; the parson came and took our musicians down to the dining-room to sing over hymns and psalms, verse by verse. I heard the wheeze of the harmonium, and got back to my own chest-lid (sailor term for my own business)—“Every man to his own chest-lid and the cook to the foresheet,” is it not a suggestive saying? To every man his prerogative, his chest-lid, and his duties, and the same for the cook and the least bit more! It is now getting passably mild,

and we can sit out on deck at night. It was supposed to be hot enough for the punkahs in the saloon ; one is hung over the length of each of the five tables, to port and starboard, and there are others the whole length of the table that runs up the middle of the saloon. I have long wished to see a punkah, now I wish I may never see another ! On this ship they are narrow velvet rugs hung on edge from horizontal bars, this is swung by two ropes from the roof, and they are all guyed together with cords, so that one pull, from a lascar outside the cabin, sets them all into violent commotion. They hit your face when you stand, and sitting, their lowest edge stirs up your hair. These velvet rugs have white cotton covers on them now that they are being used, so the general effect at dinner-time is of a huge laundry in a gale, with beautiful laundresses in low dresses sitting at table under a world of wildly flapping linen ; with the lamps lit, and our black coats for a foil, the colours are really extremely pretty, though the discomfort is great. Men and women are all getting a little brown with the sea air, and the ladies have a little of the blush of spring now, instead of the pallor of winter with which they came on board.



Egypt in sight, and this morning we tubbed in the water of the river that floated Moses, and that has been bathed in and drunk since by such a number of people we

know, or have read about. Sea and Nile are meeting in blue, and green, and brownish stripes, blending to a general absinthe colour as we get closer to the flat delta; little level rows of cloud throw purple shadows across the crisp small waves, and over the horizon there's a flight of white lateen sails.

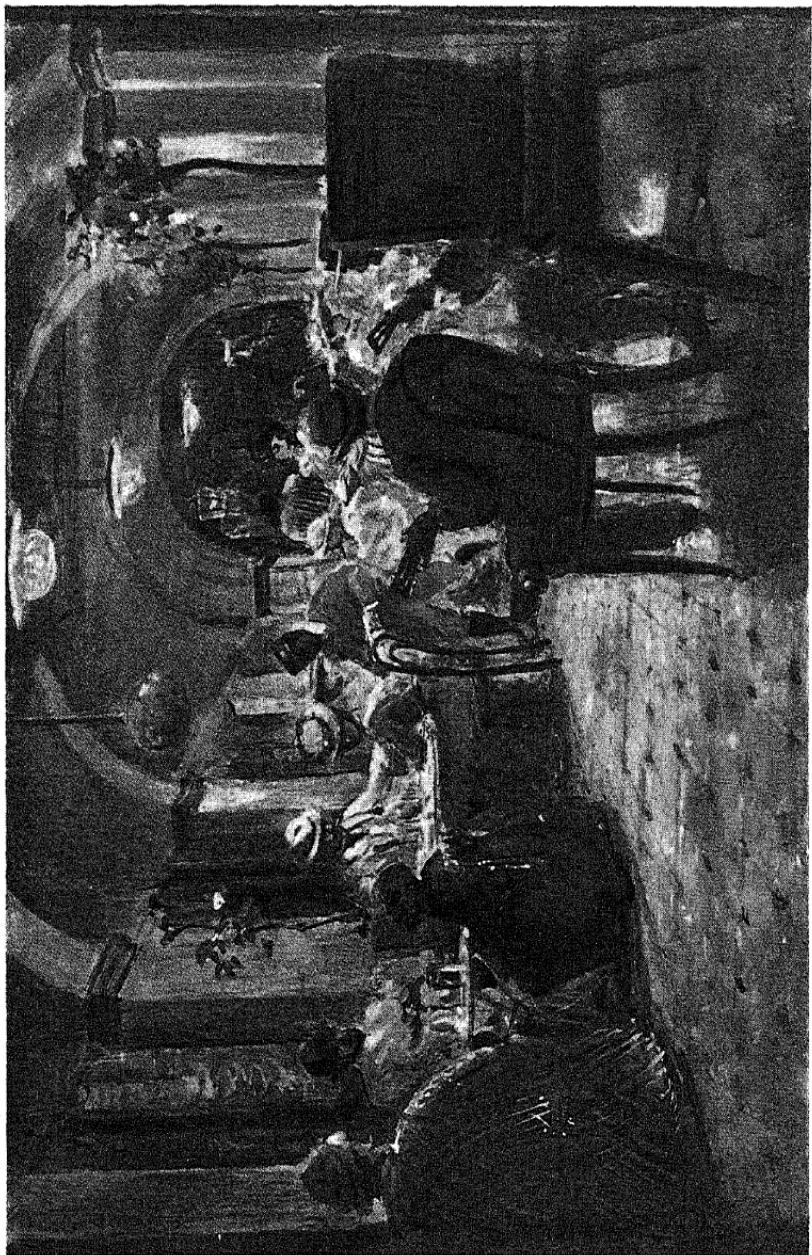
What a bustle there is on board to-day; people running up and down stairs with letters hurriedly finished, addressed and stamped to the children at home. No use writing to the man who waits out there, for we carry the mail. It is touching, the wife looking forward and back at the same time—the bull must pass—and the young girl too, leaving the old life for the new married life in a new country; it must take courage.

My notes at Port Said seem to have disappeared, possibly I did not write any. I remember that there was so much to see in the morning; and the change of colour in the water, the absinthe colour of the Nile with pale blue reflections winding in currents in distinct streams into the sea, would, with the blue ocean, need very subtile painting. I remember the fearful jabber, which I suppose has gone on and always will, since Port Said was invented. I got a glimpse of Lesseps's statue at lunch through the port-hole; he points with right hand twice life size up the harbour with a heroic expression, and seems to say to the steamers that come in from the sea, "Higher up there S.V.P.—try a little higher up." We watched the often described black men coaling in black dust, singing and working, the sun's rays making shafts of light stream through the clouds of black coal dust; and the same pandemonium at night in the flare of lights, when the scene is generally admitted to be like the nether regions.

I know we went ashore somehow or other, and that we could hardly see for the shouting and yelling! We felt fortunate in having a Mrs Deputy-Commissioner for a companion, for she was bubbling over with humour and anecdote. She and G. promptly began shopping, and certainly

succeeded in getting two rather becoming topees, flatter and prettier than any I have yet seen—you might call them Romney topees; one may appear in sketches further on. I sketched of course—always keep “screeb, screeb, screeb—ling all day long,” as an irate German lady once put it to me, “screebled” a café scene; on the left you see a native, who calls himself Jock Furgusson, trying to pass off a “Genuine Egyptian Scarab” to a tourist. Jock Furgusson is infinitely more wonderful and artistic to me than the pyramids, for he can imitate accents so as to make you gasp; he spots anyone’s nationality instantaneously—before you have opened your lips he knows your county! I believe he can distinguish between the English of a Lowland Scot and a Highlander, which is more than ‘*Punch*’ does after all these years of practice. “Ah’m, Jock Furgusson frae Auchtermurrchy and Achterlonry, longest maun in the forty twa,” he begins—but somebody help me—I’ve forgotten how he goes on, a long rigmarole in broadest Doric; the words and intonation so perfect, you can so little believe your eyes that you are landed with a scarab or a string of beads before you have recovered, and he is off to another passenger, clippin’ ‘is g’s and r’s and puttin’ in h’s to some Englishmen.

The inhabitants of Port Said, we are told, represent the scourings of the Levant; too bad for Cairo, and black-balled for Hell. All the same G. and I went ashore by ourselves after dinner, rather proud of our courage, for several passengers said it wasn’t safe. It used not to be safe, I know, but I asked the Chief-Engineer what he thought, and he took his right hand in his left, all but the very tip of the little finger which he measured off with his left thumb nail, and said, “a black maun’s heart’s no as big as that.” So we went ashore and had no adventures at all, but sat in a balcony and listened to pretty good music, and noted the few drowsy figures in the side streets, the glow of lamp or brazier on their heavy draperies, contrasting with the starlight and the deep velvety shadows—moth-like



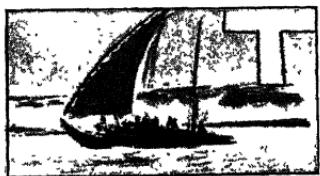
colouring, and intense repose, after the glittering, howling day.

Looking back over these notes, and the Orient and Pacific Guide Book, and the Acts of the Apostles, I observe that I have made no note about Corsica and Sardinia, Lipari Islands, and Stromboli, or of the Straits of Messina and Etna—have barely mentioned Crete! In the Lipari Islands we saw lights ashore, and down the Straits of Messina; and Stromboli we discovered easily enough by the glow of hot red up in the sky, and a sloping line of red that went glittering downwards. It was too dark to distinguish anything more.

We saw Crete, enough to swear by, the white top of Mount Ida, and realized where Fair Haven and Phenice and Clauda must lie, and that we were actually in the seas where the Apostle Paul was caught in the Euroclydon. By the way what is a Euroclydon; is it a Levanter?

Was there ever a voyage so vividly described, in more concentrated and pithy words? In eight verses you have a complete dramatic account of a tragedy at sea, from a passenger's point of view. It would be curious and interesting to learn what the owner thought, and said, when the prisoner suggested that he, and his sailing master, and the Centurion, were all wrong in a question of navigation; and how it came about that shortly after this difference of opinion the prisoner was master of the commissariat, and how, after heavy weather and fasting fourteen days on a rocky coast, 276 souls were saved on bits of wreckage without the loss of one life! The Board of Trade and Life Saving Societies might enquire into this and report.

CHAPTER VI

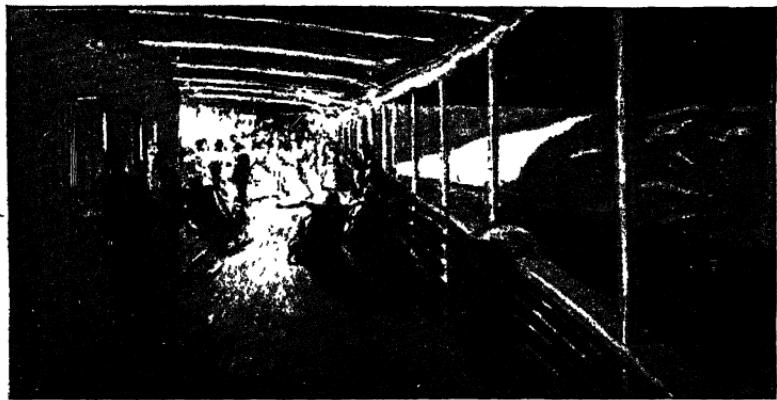


THE Canal.—If I had not seen Mr Talbot Kelly's book on Egypt I could hardly have believed it possible that the delicate schemes of colour we see in the desert as we pass through the canal could be painted and reproduced in colour in a book. He has got the very bloom of the desert, and the beauty of Egypt without its ugliness ; the heat and sparkle and brightness in his pictures are so vivid one can almost breathe the exhilarating desert air—and smell the Bazaars ! But Egypt is ugly a pin's prick beneath its beauty. It is so old and covered with bones and decayed ideas. The Nile is associated with Moses, and it is long it is true, but it is also very narrow and shallow, and its banks are monotonous to a degree ; a mile or so of green crop on either side, then stones, sand, bits of crockery, human bones and rags, then desert sand—a cross between a cemetery and a kitchen garden. The ruins are awfully ugly ! “ Think of their age ! ” people say, and you look at the exquisite spirals of shells in the lime stones with which these heaps are made ! But the saddest thing in Egypt is the fine art debased in the temples, in these ponderous monuments of their officialism ; for here and there in them you see exquisite bits of low relief carving, that a Greek would have been proud of, hidden away in interminable hieroglyphic histories spread indiscriminately over grotesque pillars and vast walls, as regardlessly of decorative effect as advertisements in a

newspaper's columns. The open desert is the best of Egypt, and this thread of blue canal strung with lakes through its sand is very pretty and interesting all the way. We come to a swing bridge. It is open and our modern hotel and modern people slowly steam right through the middle of a Biblical caravan of Arabs on camels; some have crossed into the Egyptian side, the remainder are waiting on the Arabian side, their camels are feeding on the grey-green bushes. The passengers just give them a glance and go on with their books. Have we not seen it all long ago in nursery books on Sundays. But, in the nursery in our Sunday books we did not see or feel the glitter and heat of the day, some of which, children to-day can get in Mr Kelly's book.

I dared not sketch the desert scenes ; it was in too high a key for me, but I made so bold as to do this sketch of a scene on deck at night : an effect I have not heard described, though it must be familiar to those who go this road. I am sorry it is not reproduced here in colour.

The searchlight on the bow plays on the sand-banks and desert beyond, and makes the land like a snow-



field, and the slow movement of the white light intensifies the darkness and silence of the desert. In contrast to the

cold blue light and snow-white sand, is the group of figures on deck in bright dresses, dancing. It made quite an *evident* subject. The figure leaning on the rail is not ill, it is only a little Japanese maid thinking of home perhaps.

Suez was a few lights in the darkness over the glow of our pipes, then bed, and in the morning we were sailing down the top, west branch, of the Red Sea, otherwise the Gulf of Suez, with a fresh north wind behind us.

It is extremely charming and refreshing, as I've already remarked, to look out of a port in the morning and see the glittering, tumbling, blue sea alongside. On this occasion the blue is capped with many soft white horses chasing south, and the serrated barren hills of Egypt are slipping away north. They are coloured various tints of pale, faded leather, light buff, and light red, and the sun glares brilliantly over all, "drying up the blue Red Sea at the rate of twenty three feet per year," this from the Orient-Pacific Guide ; you can yourself almost fancy you hear the sea fizzling with the heat. The Arabian shore is almost the same as the Egyptian, with a larger margin of swelling stretches of sand between the sea and the foot of the hills.

"Gaunt and dreary run the mountains,
With black gorges up the land
Up to where the lonely desert
Spreads her burning, dreary sand."

There are occasions when circumstances make it really a pleasure to be an artist, to-day for example ; the air is so full of colour, the sea deepest turquoise, with emerald showing when the crests burst white and mix with the blue, and there is a glint of reddish colour reflected from the Arabian sand, and the shadows in the clefts in the sand-hills to the north are as blue as the sea. I was trying to put this down when my friend from the West Country, who helps the engines, told me he had got me one of these exquisite classic earthenware vases from Port Said, which he decorates with cigar labels and blue and gold enamel. I had a chat with him in his rather nice cabin—

made a study of the flagon, *i.e.* drew its cork. It was full of deep purple Italian wine, like Lacrima Christie or Episcopio Rosso ; the wine was good enough, but its deep rose colour with the bright blue reflected on it through the port was splendid. He didn't like it himself, said "it drew his mouth," and he gave me both the bottle and the wine as a present because of our love for Dalriada, and I have to give him a "wee bit sketch" for his cabin.

I will smuggle the jar under our table—G. and I both like Italian wine—and we will use it as a water bottle afterwards, for we have only one decanter at our table amongst eleven thirsty people.

It was just such dark red wine as this, I suppose, that Ulysses and his friends in these seas took in skinfuls to wash down venison, an excellent menu I must say, but it would have been more seamanlike if they had slept off the effects on board, instead of lying out all night on the beach ; then, when Morning the rosy-fingered turned up, they'd have been quicker getting under way, and would have got home sooner in the end. How much superior were the Fingalian heroes ; they would sail and fight all day and pass round the uisquebaugh in the evening at the feast of shells, and never get fuddled and never feared anything under water or above land, and were beholden to neither Gods nor men.

But I did once know a descendant of theirs, in their own country who was overcome by red wine. "It was perfectly excusable," he said, for he had never tasted it before—or since ! He was a fine, tall man called Callum Bhouie, from his yellow hair when he was a youth ; he was old when I knew him—six feet two and thin as a rake and strong, with the face of Wellington and an eye like a hawk. He and his friend were going home to his croft from their occupations one morning early, round the little Carsaig Bay opposite Jura, where he had a still up a little burn there, and they fell in with a cask on the sand and there was red wine in it,

port or Burgundy, I do not know. Callum said he knew all about it and it was but weak stuff, so they took bowls and saucers and drank the weak stuff more and more. I think it must have been port ; and they lay where they were on the sand and slept till the morning after. When dawn, the rosy-fingered, found them she must have thought them quite Hellenic ; and the minister followed later, and I would not think it right to repeat what he thought it right to say. The sands and the bay and the burn are there to-day, and, as they say in the old tales, if Callum were not dead he would be alive to prove the truth of the story. The still I've never seen, but Callum I knew, and his croft ; alas the roof of it fell in a few years ago ; and it was the last inhabited house of a Carsaig clachan. You see the land is "improved" now, for sheep, and it's all in one big farm instead of small crofts, and little greasy, black-faced sheep climb the loose stone walls and nibble the green grass short as a carpet where Callum and his wife lived so long.

May I go on to the end of Callum's story ; though it is rather a far cry from this hot Red Sea to the cool Sound of Jura ?

He and his wife were to be taken to the poor house in winter, and on the long drive across Kintyre they were told that they would be separated, and there was then and there such a crying and fighting on the road that they were both driven back to the croft—and I was not surprised, for where Callum Bhouie was fighting there would not be a stronger man of his age. So they lived on in the but-and-ben, with the lonely, tall ash standing over it, and the view of Jura, the sweetest I know, in front, and he died very old indeed, and his wife followed him in two or three days, so they were not separated even by death for long.

. . . Now to my log rolling. It has already been explained by travellers of repute that the Red Sea does not take its name from its colour ; this statement, I believe, is now

generally accepted as being something more than the mere "traveller's tale." It is not, however, so generally known that this Sea is peculiarly blue, so blue, in fact, that were you to dip a white dress into it it would come out blue, or at least it looks as if it would. It reminds me of a splendid blue silk with filmy white lace spread over it. Against this the figures on the shady side of the ship look very pretty; ladies and children and menkind all in such various bright, summery colours, lying in long chairs or grouped round green card tables. "The Ladies' Gulf," it should be called now. That used to be the name for the sea off the N. W. of Africa where you pick up the North East trades as you sail south. Times have changed and sea routes, so the name should be passed east to this Gulf of Suez, where ladies and parasols look at their best and the appearance of a man in oilskins would be positively alarming.

The Indian judge with the Italian name and myself, are, as far as I can see, the only passengers who are not engaged doing something. Perhaps the judge's Italian name and my Vino Tinto respectively account for our contemplative attitudes. He has pulled his chair well forward to be out of the crowd, and makes a perfect picture of happy repose; he wears a dark blue yachting suit, and his hands are deep in his pockets. His face is ruddy, and his eyes are blue and seem to sparkle with the pleasure of watching the tumbling blue seas, and the bursting white and green crests. Just now a rope grummet, thrown by an elderly youth at a tub, rolled under his legs, and the judge handed it back most politely, and resumed contemplation. In two minutes another quoit clattered under his chair, this he likewise returned very politely; at the third, however, he sighed and gave up his study of the blue and sauntered aft to the smoking-room—such is life on a P. & O.

The above picture is intended to represent ladies in afternoon dress, the colours of the intermediate tints of

the rainbow—expressions celestial. It is the witching hour before changing from one costume to the other,



after afternoon tea and just before dressing for dinner. To the right you may observe an Ayah spoiling some young Britons.¹ You see in the background a golden sunset on a wine red sea, and our lady artist, a pupil from Juliens ; she is gazing out at the departing glory. . . . After sundown the decks are empty, for the people are below dressing and at dinner ; towards nightfall they become alive again with ladies in evening dresses with delicate scarves and laces, promenading to and fro—a difficult thing to do in such a crowd. One moment they are dark shadowy forms against the southern night sky, then they are all aglow in the lights from the music-room windows and the ports of the deck cabins.

“The-most-beautiful-lady-in-the-ship,” in dark muslin, and the stalwart-man stand near us to-night ; they are in half-light, leaning against the rail, looking out into the

¹ Make it Anglo Saxons, if you like !

darkness. I wished Whistler might have seen them ; he alone could have caught the soft night colours—the black so velvety and colourful, blurred into the dark blue of the night sky, with never the suggestion of an outline, and just one touch of subdued warm colour on the bend of her neck. Sometimes her scarf floats lightly across his sleeve and rests, and floats away again. I suppose they talk of—the weather, and repeat themselves in the dear old set terms. That is why nature is more interesting than man, it never repeats itself or displays an effect for more than a minute. Five men out of any six on board, I believe, would make a fair copy of the conversation of these two, but only one man who has lived in our times could have made a fist at that effect of faint lamp-light and fainter moonlight on the black of the coat against the deep blue-black of the star spangled southern sky. Only the "Master" could have got the delicacy and movement of the faintly sea-green veil that sometimes lifts on the warm breeze and floats an instant across the sky and the broadcloth ; he would have got the innermost delicacy of colour form purely and simply, without an inch, of conventional paint or catch-penny sentiment.

CHAPTER VII

I believe this is the 5th. These 'chits' help one to remember dates; they are little cards presented you when you order soda water or wine, or are solicited for subscriptions to sports or sweepstakes. They have the date marked on them, and you add your name, and number of berth, and away goes your steward to the bar or wine man, and you get what you ordered; it may be ages afterwards, when you have almost forgotten what it was you ordered, but punctually at the end of the week, you get them in a bundle and pay up." "I find," to quote Carlyle again, "I have a considerable feeling of astonishment at the unexpected size of the bundles. It's a most excellent system, and if there wasn't such a crowd it would work out all right here."

It is uncomfortably warm now and damp. Last night we on the main deck had to sleep with ports closed, so we had to live with very little air; I do not know what the temperature was, not having a thermometer with us, as we are almost amidship and near the engine, it must have been considerable.

. . . The Red Sea does not grow in my affections; as we go south there is too much of the sensation of being slowly stewed. At Babel Mandeb I believe the temperature of the sea rises to 100° F.

The islands we pass on the shore to the east, distant about fifteen miles as I write, are interesting enough. I suppose the inhabitants are somewhat irresponsible, and were we to land there in the boats unarmed, might find us full occupation for the rest of our lives as slaves in the

interior. There was a ship wrecked on this coast some years ago, and her boat's crew landed, and were either



killed or are up country slaving. R. tells me the wife of one of them lives beside his people in Fife, which makes us feel almost in touch with the sandy shore. What an anomaly—a modern steamship packed with western civilisation reeling off twenty knots an hour—past a desert land of lawless nomadic Arab tribes.

As we get south nearer Aden the sand spits tail out south and slope off inland like wide glaciers, through which appear dark coloured rocky islets.

. . . We had rather bad luck yesterday and to-day ; the iron wind catcher put out at our port to make a draught caught a sea, and threw it all over our cabin. G.'s maid had just opened my overland trunk to give the contents an airing, and now my collars are pulp and rose pink from the lining of the collar box, so I must call on the barber who runs a shop on board. We had the carpet taken up and our clothes hung up to dry, but they won't, for the air is so hot and damp—with the least exertion you steam ! Imagine the joy of having to dress for dinner in such cramped space and heat—you drop a stud and a year of your life in finding it ! I think most people realise that their feelings under these circumstances cannot be exactly described in decorous language, so they set their teeth in grim silence ; and after all there is something laughable about all the trouble—we needn't go in for white shirts and black coats and trousers in the tropics unless we like. Everyone feels them horribly uncomfortable and unsuitable, but no one dares to be so utterly radical as

come to dinner in anything else. If a flannel shirt and shorts were the fashion, if only for the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, how many valued lives would be prolonged. The penance in India is not so bad; there your *Boy* hunts your stud whilst you sit and cool.

A number of passengers sleep on deck now; I suppose three and four in a cabin is intolerable. They have their mattresses brought up on deck by their cabin steward, and he chalks their number on the deck at their feet; you can thus sleep in a strong wet draught under the officers' deck. There is a great deal of pleasure in sleeping in the open, but you should have nothing but stars overhead and a shelter to windward, if it is only a swelling in the ground or a sod or two. The ladies have a part of the deck reserved, and the floor of the music room round the well that opens into the dining-saloon below. Their part of the deck is defended at night by a zereba of deck chairs, piled three or four feet high; it suggests privacy!

We had our port open last night again—my fault—and just as G. came to my end of the cabin to tell me the waves were getting near the port, in one came! So we spent the small hot hours rearranging things, shut the port and slept the sleep of the weary, and awakened more dead than alive from too little air and too much water.

Yesterday the ship went on fire. It started on the woodwork of the companion way, where there was a place for stationery; there was a mighty mess of water and smell of smoke and a panel or two burned, and no great damage done, as far as I can hear. I am surprised we don't go on fire every day with so many smokers chucking cigarette ends overboard. The wind-catchers sticking out of the ports of course catch these, and they blow into the berths. Yesterday, however, to prevent this, two or three buckets with sand in them were put down on deck in which cigarette ends are to be buried and pipes knocked out, so there's a chance for us all yet!

This morning I made a water-colour for my engineer friend, as a return for the wine vase he gave me. I thought he'd like a sketch of a Highland burn in spate—thought it would be cooling. How it came about I cannot explain, but I did him a recollection of a burn within five to seven miles, by sea, of his birthplace in Jura! I'd put him down as coming from the Clyde.

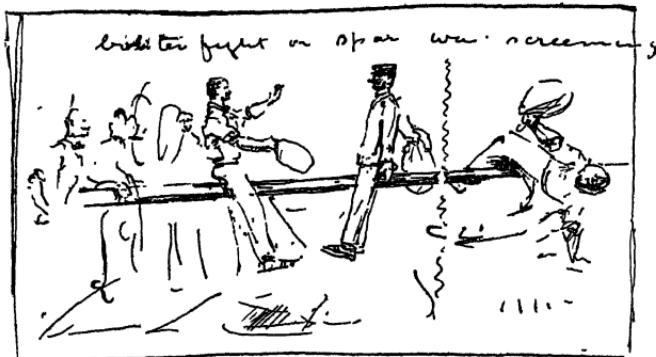
The biggest event for me in this day's reckoning was the discovery that the distinguished judge I observed contemplating the blue waves for some minutes, was an artist before he took to Law! You might have knocked me down with a feather—five years in Lauren's studio in Paris, and three pictures on the line the year he was called to the bar and two of them sold! We had a great talk about art and all the rest of it. He and Jacomb Hood and others were fellow students, and he and Jacomb Hood and this writer, and various artists and newspaper men are to meet at his board in Calcutta and have a right good Bohemian evening as in days of yore.

Is it not curiously sanguine this belief, to which I've seen quite old men clinging—that you can repeat a good time. It is possible we will have a good evening, and talk lots of shop, for we all know far more about it now, than we did then; but it was what we did not know, that gave the charm to student days.

We talk art and technique pretty hard, but I can't quite get over the shock—an artist—become a judge—A Quartier Latin Art Student—a Judge of the High Court—with a fixed income, and on his way to Calcutta, perhaps to hang folk!

We had sports to-day and a sing-song in the evening. The sports were very amusing; the bolster fight on a spar doesn't sound interesting, but it was; it got quite exciting towards the end as the wiry cavalry colonel, hero of many a stricken field, knocked out all comers, young or old. Egg and spoon races and threading needles were a little stupid, but what tableaux the groups of

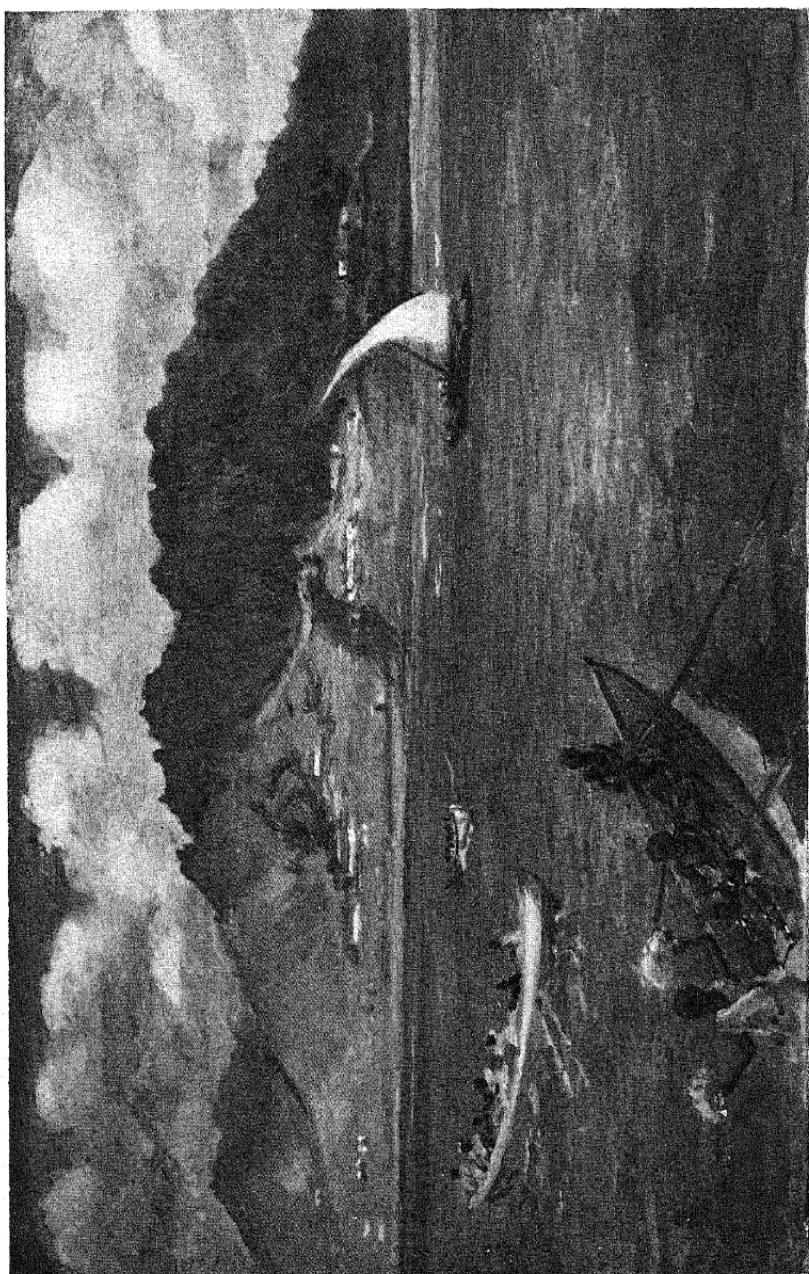
fair women made, with the bright dresses and complexions, and the jolly brown young men, all in the soft light that



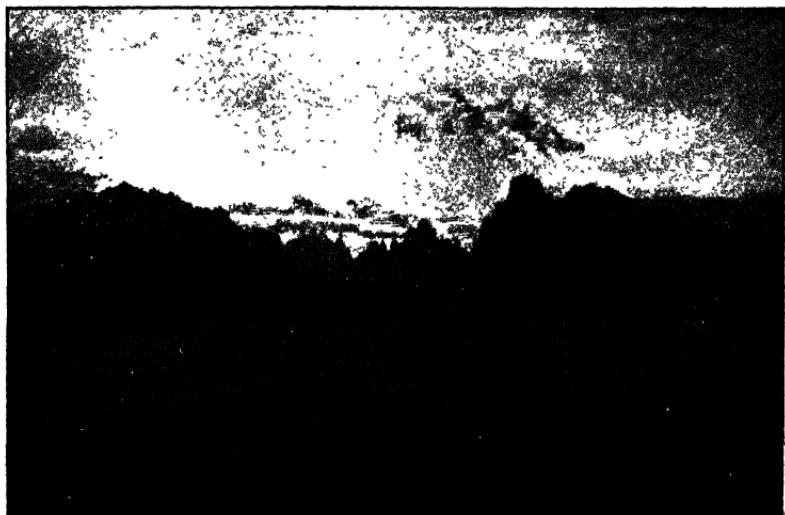
was filtering through the awning and blazing up from under its edge from the sea.

Sunday—at Aden—loafed all morning—vowed I'd not paint—bustle and movement too great—painted hard in afternoon—horribly difficult—too many people—ladies skirt in palette—man's hoof in water tin—chucked it.

This is verbatim from my log and expresses a very little of one's feelings; everyone is so jolly and polite too, you just have to stop, or go on and show temper. Two or three of the passengers tried to paint effects, each formed a centre of a group of people, who looked over their shoulders, the onlookers one after another remarking with ingratiating smiles, "You don't mind my looking, do you?" Why on earth do people look over the shoulders of persons painting, when they would never dream of looking over the shoulder of any one writing? Notwithstanding the crowd and polite requests to be "allowed to look," and the untellable effort required to give soft answers, I did manage to make a sketch or two at Aden—one of stony hills and government houses in the background, and in the front green water and the vendors of fans and beads, and curious brown, naked, active fellows in sharp stemmed light coloured boats, which they could row! Some of them had turbans, pink or lemon yellow,



or white skull caps, and there were also Egyptian officials and soldiers in white uniform and red turbash, in white launches that raced about through the green water, cutting a great dash of white with their bows ; there was colour enough, and movement and sun galore.



I suppose these "ragged rocks and flinty spires" are the rocks that inspired the Pipe-Major with the cheery farewell to "The Barren Rocks of Aden"—here they are the rocks you see from Aden—everyone knows the tune.

7th October.—The lady artist and I compared sketches. We both worship Whistler, and various writers we agree about, but I fear we are only in sympathy so far. I gathered from her to-night that I ought to study native character in India, for our countrymen in India had no picturesqueness, no art about them, and to associate with them one had better be at home. I felt saddened and went on deck and saw the people she called "Anglo-Indians" (more than two-thirds Scots, Irish, Cornish, and Welsh, with a negligible fraction of possible Angles) all

lying like dead men in rows, with no side or show about them as they lay ; some in contorted positions, with here and there a powerful limb or well rounded northern head showing in the half dark. Rulers of the Indian Empire, by Odin ! or Jove ! damp and hot, and in the dark, in a strong draught, without a pick of gold lace, prostrate, sweating uncomfortably, sleeping ; and travelling as their innumerable predecessors have ever travelled, from the North to rule the South.



They may be inartistic, but they look mighty touching, pathetic, and wonderful, not only the individual whose legs you step over but that almighty race combine—whatever you call it¹—which he represents. . . . Ladies were stealing to their lairs in the zereba on deck, and in the music room ; they look quite Eastern, all muffled up in tea gowns and gauzy draperies. The music room has only recently been reserved for them at night ; a mere man who had camped there with wife and child did not know of the change ; and Mrs Deputy-Commissioner told us they were all lying out there in the dark when the man entered in pyjamas and had stepped over a dozen prostrate forms when Mrs D.-C. said incisively, “ We are all ladies here,”

¹ British or English.

and he murmured "Good Lord," and his retreat was rapid—what a scare he had!

Only one more day's dull reckoning and we will be ashore. I expect everyone is getting rather sick of the crowded life. A fancy dress ball pulled through last night. Most ingenious dresses were made up, and prizes were given to the best. All those in fancy dress formed up and walked past the judges in single file. There were pretty much the usual stock costumes, and nothing original amongst the ladies. The very black-eyed belle with red cheeks wore a mantilla of course, and gripped a fan and had a camellia in her hair, and was called Andalusian, but her walk and expression were "made in England"—a Spanish girl's expression and walk can't be got up in a day or two. The-most-beautiful-lady-in-the-ship was—upon my word, I don't know what her dress was called, something of the "Incroyable" period; whatever it was



called, she carried it well and could walk, the rest merely toddled. She is Australian, still, I'd have given her First Prize. The lady who did get it, was really very pretty, and dressed as a white Watteau or Dresden shepherdess.

Amongst the men “The British Tourist” was perfection—answered all requirements, and suggested the tourist of old and the tourist of to-day ; he had check trousers, chop whiskers, a sun hat, umbrella, blue spectacles, and the dash of red Bædeker for colour. Then an Assistant-Commissioner, an Irishman, was splendidly got up. I’d noticed he had been out of sight a good deal lately—he had been sewing his own clothes, and they were really well made! “An Eastern Potentate” he called himself, or a Khedive, and ran to riot in a jumble of orders and jewellery and gold chains. Trousers and jacket were pale cinnamon with scarlet facings and a red turbash, and how well the clothes fitted ! clever Mr B. ; he knows so much about many subjects, and can sew ! He and my Judge acquaintance were arguing last night. The Judge is a Cornishman. When you get a highly educated Cornishman and an Irishman together, however long they have been in England, and they begin to talk, it’s worth while sitting out. B. explained in soft and winning words to the Judge that his life was a giddy round of society, long leave, and high pay, whilst he in the far North led a lonely life of continuous hard work and no pay to speak of ; and the Judge, with equal if not greater fluency, described B.’s up-country life as perpetual leave on full pay, a long delightful picnic, and so on and so forth. My sympathy went with the Judge ; I think his life is the least pleasant, but one had to allow for his greater rapidity of speech and practice in courts before juries, besides his art studies in Paris. Later R. joined ; he is an advocate in Calcutta and hails from the Hebrides. Then came a Welsh Major, a gunner. That made a party of an Irishman, two Scots (one of them anglicised), a Welsh, and a Cornishman, and they discussed everything under the sun except the Celtic Renaissance : for they spend their days on the confines of the Empire, and the brain takes time to make the tail wag.

CHAPTER VIII



OMBAY. — I've travelled these three weeks with people who have lived in India, and I have been brought up on Indian books and Indian home letters, and in one way and another have picked up an idea of what the people and the features of nature are like, but I have received only a very faint idea of its real light and colour. I thought Egypt had given me a fair idea of what India might be, but nothing in Egypt can touch what I've seen in these two half days,

Our first view of Bombay from where we lay at anchor a mile off shore was very disappointing. All there is to see is a low shore and a monotonous line of trees and houses ; the air was warm and damp and hazy, and the smoke from two or three tall chimneys hung in thin wreaths over land and water. In our immediate neighbourhood steamers were coaling, and their dust did not add any beauty to the picture, and the actual landing is not very interesting ; you get off the ship to the wharf in a big launch, a slow process but quietly and well-managed, and on shore have a little trouble about your luggage, even though it may be in the hands of an agent. I'd two or three cab voyages, "gharry," I should have said, before I got the best part of ours to the Taj Hotel. There a friend had booked us our rooms before we sailed, and on the morning of our arrival had very thoughtfully secured them with

lock and key, so that no unscrupulous Occidental could play on Oriental weakness and bag them before our arrival.

The journeys in the gharry were not entirely successful, and I didn't get all our baggage till next day, but they presented me with one astounding series of beautiful pictures, so that my head fairly reeled with the continuous effort to grasp the way of things and their forms and colours, things in the street, themselves perhaps of no great interest but for the intense colourful light. — There is a water carrier; the sun shines blue on the back of his brown bare legs and back, and blazes like electric sparks on the pairs of brass water pots he carries slung across his shoulders. He is jogging along fast, his "shoulder knot a - creaking," and the water that splashes on to the hot dust intensifies the feeling of heat and light.



Then you catch the flash of silver rings in the dust on a woman's toes as she strides along, and have the unfamiliar pleasure of seeing the human form, God's image in brown, and note the rounded limbs and bust, and the movement of hip and swinging arm through white draperies, which the sun makes a golden transparency. What thousands of figures, and all in different costumes or bare skin.

Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales arrived the day before we did, so the air vibrates with the salutes from guns, and is full of heat and curdling smoke, and colour. "The Prince" is distinctly in the air,

and we feel glad in consequence that we have arrived in time to have seen the town at its brightest: from morning to night there is one scene after another of continually shifting figures and colours, perfectly fascinating to us new-comers.

. . . . Guns again from the war ships, aimed right at our windows! Everything jingles, the air is quivering with the sound and light. The ships in the bay are ablaze with flags, and the sides of the Apollo Bundar (the landing place of the Prince) are a mass of decorations and flags. Below our windows in the shadow of our hotel on the embankment, the crowd of natives in their best behaviour and best clothes move to and fro making holiday, watching the ships and any ceremony that may come off in their neighbourhood, for like our own natives they love a tamasha. They wear flimsy clothes of varied colours, lemon-yellow and pale rose, white and pale green, and the Southern light softens all these by making each reflect a little on to the other.

. . . . There they go again! banging away—good thing there's no glass in our hotel windows! You can hardly see the shipping now, the smoke hangs low on the turquoise blue of the bay, and you can just see the yellow gleam of the flash and feel the concussion and the roar that follows.

Interjectory this journal must be, even my sketches are running into meaningless strokes with so many subjects following one on the top of the other. In the pauses that follow the passing of troops and gun-firing, the crowds in the streets below our hotel watch snake charmers, jugglers, and monkey trainers who play up to us at our balconies.

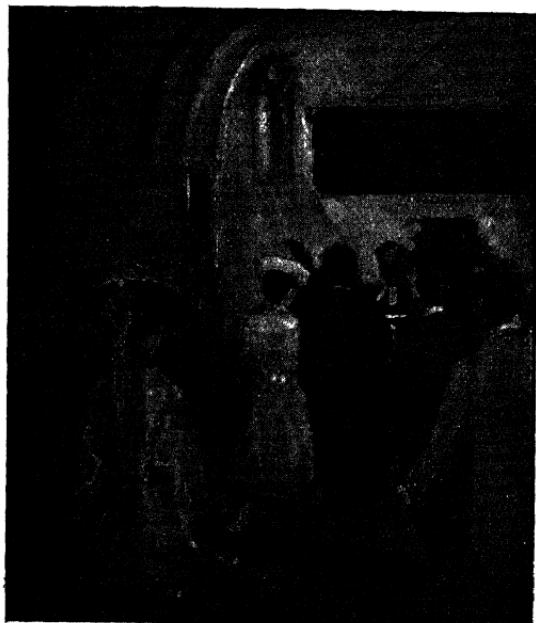
What a delight!—there they are, all the figures we knew as dusty coloured models as children, now all alive and moving and real. The snake charmer, a north countryman, I think, sits on his heels on the road and grins up at us and chatters softly and continuously, holding up his hands full of emerald green slow moving snakes; a crowd of

holiday townspeople stand round him at a little distance and watch closely. He stows the green snakes away into a basket, and his hands are as lithe as his snakes but quicker, then pipes to nasty cobras, the colour of the dusty road; they raise the r heads and blow out their hoods and sway to and fro as he plays. Then the mongoose man shows how his beast eats a snake's head—no trick about this! And always between the turns of the performances the performers look up and show their white teeth and talk softly to us, but we can't hear what they say the windows are so high up. Then bang go the guns again, and we shut our blinds and try to read of the show of the day, the opening of Princes Street, when the Prince drove through "millions of happy and prettily dressed subjects." As we read there comes a knock and a message with an invitation card to see the Prince open a museum, and we read on; another knock comes just as I'd begun to draw the Prince as we saw him last night in a swirl of dust, outriders, and cavalry, blurred in night and dust and heat—it is another card! To meet their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales to-night at Government House! Surely this is the veritable land of the tales of the Arabian Nights! It comes as a shock to live all your life in your own country and never to see the shadow of Royalty, then suddenly to be asked twice in one day to view them as they pass—I am quite overcome—It will be a novel experience, and won't it be warm! It means top hat, frock coat and an extra high collar for the afternoon, and in the evening a hard, hot, stiff shirt and black hot clothes, and a crush and the thermometer at pucca hot-weather temperature, and damp at that, but who cares, if we actually see Royalty—twice in one day!

I am determined not to go out to-day, not on any account. I will sit in this tower room of this palace and write and draw, and will shut these jalousies that open west and south and north-east, and offer distracting

views, and I will contemplate the distempered walls in the shade till I have recalled all I saw yesterday. If I go to the window, or outside, there will be too many new things to see. I maintain that for one day of new sights, a day is needed to arrange them in the tablets of memory. . . . But is it possible I saw all these things in one day! From a tiny wedding in the Kirk in the morning to the Royal Reception at Government House at night; from dawn till late night one splendid line of pictures of Oriental and Occidental pageantry, of which I have heard and read of so much and realised so little compared with reality.

We started the day with a wedding of a lady we knew on board, to a young Scottish officer, the day after her



arrival. We directed our "boy" to tell our driver to go to the Free Church. But apparently neither of these benighted heathens could distinguish between the "Free" and the "Wee Free," or the "U. P." or the "Established"

and took us to the English Church. We had such a hunt for the particular branch of the Church of Scotland. It was quite a small kirk, and our numbers were in proportion. We arrived a little hot and angry at being so misled, but the best man, a brother officer of the bridegroom, had not turned up, so we waited a little and chatted and joked a little, and felt in our hearts we would wish to see the bride and bridegroom's friends and relations about them. The best man came soon, and the bridegroom's colonel, and made an audience of four, not counting the minister; and the somewhat lonely pair stood before him, with the punkah above them, and the sun streamed through latticed windows and a modest bit of stained glass, and they were joined for better and no worse I am sure. Then the minister opened a little paste board box someone had sent from home, and out came a little rice, and we four got a little each and threw it very carefully, two or three grains at a time so as not to miss. The bride had a dainty sprig of white heather in a brooch of a lion's collar bone, and was dressed in white and had a very becoming rose from home, and the sea, on her cheeks. As we prayed I made a sketch of them for her sister at home. Then they and the witnesses signed their names, and where their hands and wrists touched the vestry table there was a tiny puddle, and yet this is what they call "cold weather" here!

We met the bride and bridegroom later at lunch, and we drank to each other's health in pegs of lemon squash after the latest fashion East of Suez.

"It was a wee, wee waddin'
In a far, far toon,"

and it's far awayness from friends and relatives and their own country was rather pathetic, even though the pair looked so handsome and happy.

We drove back more leisurely and marvelled at the innumerable lovely groups in streets and by-ways, the flicker of light through banyan trees on white-robed

figures, the little carts with big wooden wheels and small oxen and sharp big shadows, and we stopped to watch a splendid group of men washing clothes, a dozen or more naked brown statues against a white low wall, water splashing over them and round them, flecks of sun and shadows coming through the leaves—I suppose these were natives from the north as they had good legs. I must try and put that down this afternoon if I can, and bring in the hedge of convolvulus with lilac blooms behind and the hoody crows dancing round ; then past lines of pretty horses and tents and officers and ladies at lunch. At our lunch at the Taj we bade good-bye to five friends, R. and D. for Bangalore, Mrs D. C. for the north, and our newly-married pair for Baroda. So G. and I and Mr and Mrs H. remain out of our table on board ship ; the H.'s stay for a time at the Taj and tell us so much about Bombay, its people, and their ways, that a guide book would feel very dry reading.

By the afternoon we have received I think five invitations on yellow cards to various royal functions ! Now indeed we are in the marvellous East, in the land to which Scot and Irish should travel to see their prince or king. So you, my dear friends, artists and professional men, who have chosen to live as I have done, in or near the capital of your native land, and whose most thrilling pageant in the whole year is the line of our worthy bailies and the provost in hired coaches going up the High Street to open a meeting of ministers, if you would experience the feeling that stirred the blood of your ancestors so hotly, the feeling of personal loyalty to prince or king, the sense that is becoming as dormant as the muscles behind our ears, all you have to do is to leave your native shores and your professional duties, and home ties, and travel to some outlying part of the Empire ; say to Bombay—there and back will cost you about £200 by P. & O., but you will realise then that the old nerves may still vibrate. You, my friends, who can't

afford this luxury, you must just stay at home and be as loyal as you can under the circumstances, and try not to think of our departed glories, and Home Rule, or Separation—and you can read, about these yellow tickets to royal shows and such far off things, in traveller's tales.

The first of these functions was the laying of the foundation of a museum of science and art; it sounds prosaic, but it was a pageant of pageantry and pucca tomasha too; the greater part, I daresay, just the ordinary gorgeousness of this country, fevered with stirring loyalty. The ceremony was in the centre of an open space of grass, surrounded by town buildings of half Oriental and half Western design, and blocks of private flats, each flat with a deep verandah and all bedecked with flags, and gay figures on the roofs and in the verandahs. In the centre of the grass were shears with a stone hanging from them on block and tackle. To our left was a raised dais with red and yellow striped tent roof supported on pillars topped with spears and flags and the three golden feathers of the Prince of Wales. In front of the circle of chairs opposite this and to our right sat the Indian princes; they had rather handsome brown faces and fat figures, and wore coats of delicate silks and satins, patent leather shoes and loose socks, big silver bangles and anklets; their turbans and swords sparkled with jewels, and the air in their neighbourhood was laden with the scents of Araby.

Behind us sat the Parsees and their women-folk, soberly clad in European dress; they are intelligent looking people with pleasant cheery manners, I would like to see more of them. Their fire-worship interests me, for it was till lately our own religion, and I even to-day know of an old lady in an out-of-the-way corner of our West Highlands who, till quite recently, went through various genuflexions every morning—old forms of fire-worship—as the sun rose; and in the Outer Isles we have still many

remains of our fore-fathers' worship woven into the untruthful jingling rhymes of the monks.¹

Through the pillars of the Shamiana we could see lines of white helmets of troops, and beyond them the crowds of natives in bright dresses, banked against the houses and in groups in the trees, a kaleidoscope of colour. Past this came a whirl of Indian cavalry with glittering sabres, and the Prince and Princess came on to the dais—more brightly dressed than they were in Oxford Street three weeks ago, the Prince in a white naval uniform with a little gold and a white helmet, an uncommonly becoming dress though so simple ; the Princess in the palest pink with a suggestion of darker pink showing through, and a deep rose between hat and hair. A tubby native in frock coat and brown face and little pink turban held a mushroom golden umbrella near the Prince and Princess, not over them, it really was not needed for there were clouds, and the light was just pleasant. The Prince then "laid" the stone—that is, some natives slackened the tackle, and it came down all square—and he and the Princess talked to the Personages in attendance and various City Dignitaries. First, I should have said, the Prince read a speech which seemed to me to cover the ground admirably. I forget what he said now, but you could hear every word. He had notes, but I think he spoke by heart. I made a careful picture of it all ; red decorations, green grass, Prince and Princess, and the golden umbrella, but it is gone, lost—gone where pins go, I suppose.

You should have heard the people cheering, and seen the running to and fro of crowds to catch a glimpse of the great Raj as he drove away ! In a minute the great place was all on the move, Rajahs getting into their carriages and dashing off with their guards riding before and behind, and smaller Rajahs with seedier carriages and only bare-footed footmen jumping up behind.

¹ See "Carmina Gadelica, the Treasure House, Hymns and Incantations of Highlands and Islands," collected by Alexander Carmichael, 1900, and there also the pre-Christian game and fishing laws of Alba.

Everyone was happy and interested, and what a bustle and movement there was! The banging of the guns on the men-of-war began again as the motley, fascinatingly interesting crowd, cavalry outriders, Sikhs, Parsees, Gourkas, Hindoos, and Mussulmen, sped away down to the Apollo Bundar to see the Prince go off to the flagship. H. and I went with the tide, a jolly cheery medley of coloured races, waddling, trotting, running, the whole crowd cut in two by the Royal Scots marching through them, their pipers playing the "Glendaruil Highlanders." Sandies and Donalds and natives of India, but all subjects of the great Raj: and all got down together to the Bundar to see the Royal embarkation. Next we met G. and Mrs H. driving as fast as possible through the crowd to still another function, at the Town Hall, where the British Princess met the women of all India in their splendour, and woman's world met woman's world for the world's good. I'd fain have seen the tall, fair, Saxon surrounded by devoted Eastern subjects! All I did see was some of the preparations — red cloth being laid in acres up to a stately Parthenon — but from various accounts I have heard from ladies who were present, this must have been one of the most extraordinary and gorgeous functions the world has ever seen.

The Princess, in robes and creations that chilled words, walked ankle-deep in white flower petals and golden clipplings, pearls rained, and on all sides were grouped the most beautiful Eastern ladies in most exquisite silks of every tint of the rainbow, with diamonds, pearls, and emeralds and trailing draperies, skirts, and soft veils, and silken trousers; sweet scents and sounds there were too, in this Oriental dream of heaven, and everything showed to the utmost advantage in the mellow trembling light that fell from two thousand five hundred candles, and one hundred and ninety-nine glittering and bejewelled candelabra. And in the middle, there was a golden throne of bejewelled

peacocks, and punkahs and umbrellas of gold and rose—a dream of beauty—and not one man in the whole show!

The Apollo Bundar, as everyone who has been in India knows, is a projecting part of the esplanade below the Taj Hotel. Here Royalties are in the habit of landing and embarking. On the centre has been built something in the nature of a triumphal arch with eastern arches and minarets at its four corners with golden domes. It is all white, and between it and the pavilion at the landing stairs a great awning, or Shamiana is stretched, of broad red and white striped cloth. Everywhere are waving flags from golden spears, and little palms and shrubs in green tubs are arranged on either side of the Shamiana; and the effect is quite pretty; but considering the historic importance of the occasion and the natural suitability of the surroundings for a Royal landing, the conception and arrangement of spectacular effect was astoundingly poor—and it must be admitted it is a mistake to hide the principal actors at the most telling point of a momentous event with bunting and shrubs in pots, or both! The actual landing, the stepping on shore, should have been pictorial and visible to the thousands of spectators. Instead of this, the Royal personages, the moment they stepped ashore, were conducted into this tent, to listen to written speeches! What an occasion for a great spectacular effect lost for ever!

When we got down to the Bundar the Sikh cavalry had dismounted and stood at their horses' heads; their dark blue and dark rose uniforms and turbans made a foil to the brilliant dresses of the crowd.

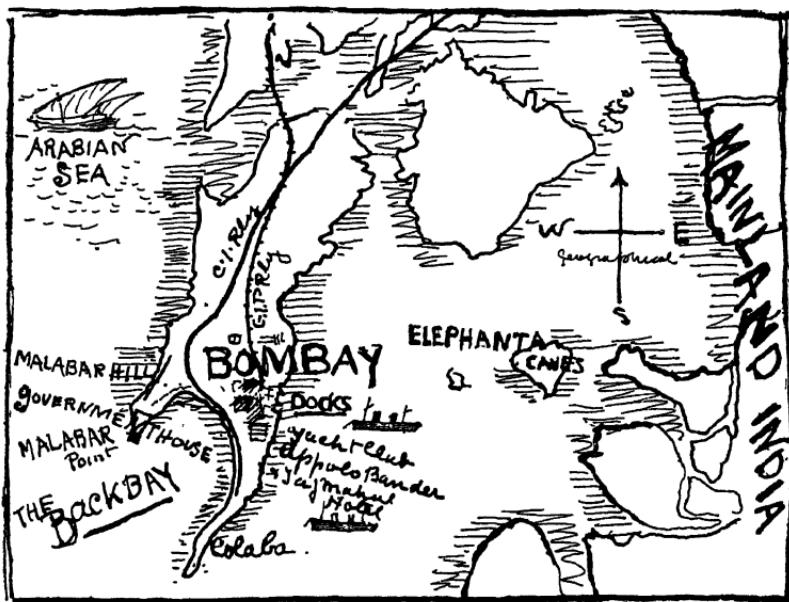
After witnessing the departure of the Prince, we sat a breathing space on the lawn at the Yacht Club and watched the day fading, "Evening falling, shadows rising," and the ladies dresses growing faint in colour, as the background of the Bay and the white men-of-war became less distinct; the golden evening light crept up the lateen sails in front of us and left them all

grey, and the moon rose beyond the Bay, and the club lamps were lit, and the guns began to play—vivid flashes of flame; and a roar round the fleet, straight in our faces, and again far over to Elephanta, yellow flashes in the violet twilight, and the Prince came ashore.

The cavalry and their lances at once follow his carriage; they are silhouetted against the last of gold in the west, flicker across the lamps of the Bundar, and rattle away into the shadows of the streets. There is the noise of many horses feet and harness, and the last of the guns from the fleet. Then the night is quiet again and hot as ever, and there's nothing left of the glare and noise of the day, only the glowing lamps on some of the buildings, and the subdued hum of the talk of the moving thousands, and the whispering sound of their bare feet in the dust. The Eastern crowd is distinctly impressed and very much compressed; they will now spend the rest of the evening gazing at the Bombay public buildings that are being lit all over with little oil lamps.

And this was but a small part of the day for us, the best was to come in the damp, hot night.

CHAPTER IX



(With apologies to the Indian Surveys.)

DINED at our hostlerie; in every direction vistas of uniforms, ladies' dresses, maharajahs, rajahs, turbans, and jewels, the marble pillars and the arches of blue night over the bay for background.

Then we got away in a bustle of hundreds of other carriages and gharries, all bound for Government House. We started a little late; you may have observed that with ladies you are apt to be late for social functions, but rarely miss a train! H. and I drove ahead with soothing cigars, and the ladies came close behind.

On our left we passed the R.H. Artillery Camp, rows

of tents frosted with moonlight against the southern sea, some had lamps glowing inside ; and further on we passed their lines of picketed horses, with silent native syces squatted on the sand at their feet.

. . . The dust hangs heavily from the gharries in front of us as we drive north round the Back Bay, which we are told is very beautiful, and like the Bay of Naples in the daytime ; what we see on this warm night is a smooth, dark sea, which gives an infrequent soft surge on the shore, a few boats lie up on the moonlit sand and figures lie asleep in their shadows, and others sit round little fires. Dark palm stems and banyan trees are between us and the sea, and to our right are fern-clad rocks and trees in night green shade, rising steeply to where we can distinguish white walls and lights of villas of the wealthy Bombay natives.

We pass the Parsis' Towers of Silence, where vultures entomb the dead, and inhale for a long part of the road the smoke of burning wood and Hindoos—an outrageous experience. The road rises gradually and gets narrower as we leave the shore, and the procession of carriages goes slower. On either side are low white walls and villas and heavy foliage. Coloured lamps are hung in every direction, and their mellow lights blend pleasantly with the moonlight and shadows, and shine through the flags that hang without movement, and light up ropes of flowers and ribands with gold inscriptions of welcome, that stretch from tree to tree across the road. You read on them in golden letters, "Tell papa how happy we are under British Rule," and on the walls, sitting or lying at length, and in the trees are bronze-coloured natives in white clothes, or in the buff, silently watching the procession of carriages, and they do look as contented as can be ; and so would we be too, if we had to get into their evening undress instead of hard shirts and broad cloth on such a damp, hot night. It is November and ought to be cool, but this year everyone says it is just October as regards temperature and moisture, and October, they say, is the beastliest

month in the twelve. The drive of four or five miles takes over an hour, and looking south we see the lights shining across the bay from where we started. We climb slowly up Malabar Hill in the dusky shade of the heavy foliage and come to a stop amongst crowds of other carriages opposite Government House.

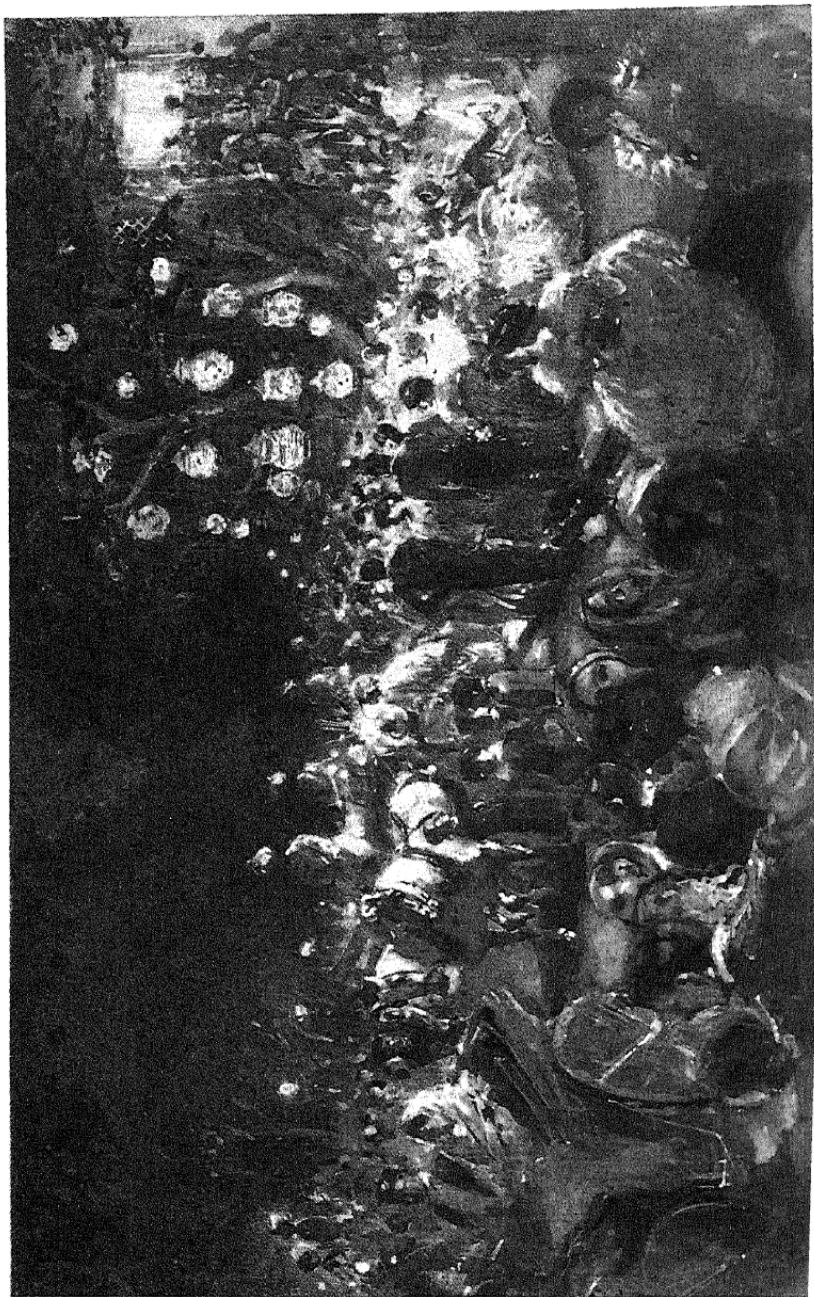
I'd like to stop and paint this scene, it would suit the stage—the marquee on the right, pale moonlight on its ridge, and warm light and colour showing through its entrance as ladies go in to put off their cloaks; its guy ropes are fast to branches and air roots of a banyan tree; and to the left there is another graceful tree, with wandering branches, hung with many red and yellow paper lamps, the branches like copper in the light and in shadow black against the dark blue sky. In front is part of Government House, dim white with trellis work and creepers round a classic verandah, and lamplight coming through the open jalousies. Leading up to the verandah are wide steps in shadow; and on these, a light catching now and then on a jewel or scabbard, are groups of Indian Princes. Beside us on the lawn are people in all kinds of dresses, soldiers in uniform and the gold dull in the shadows, ladies in fairy-coloured ball dresses, and Parsi men in frock-coats and shiny black hats, their women in most delicate veils over European dresses. The figures move quietly and speak softly, and the air is full of the rattle of crickets or cicadas and a pleasant scent of night flowers, and cheroot smoke, with a whiff of old ocean.

We wait and chat outside with acquaintances, and some ladies practise curtseys whilst the natives are being received—the coloured man first, the white man and his womenfolk when they may! Then we all go up the steps and into the brilliant interior, which is Georgian in style, and light and prettily coloured. It is distinctly a sensation, to come from semi-darkness into full light and such an extraordinary variety of people and colour and costumes. The figures in the half light outside were

interesting, in the full blaze of hundreds of candles from many chandeliers the effect is just as brilliant as anything one could imagine. The strong colours of the natives' turbans, silk coats, sashes, and jewels enrich the scene, and their copper colour helps to set off the splendid beauty of our women with their dazzling skins and delicately coloured dresses. Positively these princes were inches deep in emeralds, diamonds, and pearls.



Then comes the tableau of the evening, the Prince and Princess walking with aides-de-camp through their Eastern and Western subjects, with an introduction made here and there. The Prince walks in front and the Princess a few steps behind. She seems very pleased and interested, and still, I think, looks under her eye lest she should fail to recognise some one she would wish to notice, and the Prince's expression is so pleasant, quiet, and possessed in repose, and with a very ingratiating smile. He stops and speaks to right and left, to one of our officers, or a native prince. One, a tall grizzled old fellow with gorgeous turban and the eye and air of a



hunter, bends very low over the offered hand, and talks a moment, possibly tells how he shot with the King when he was Prince, and how there are tigers and devoted subjects waiting in the north in his state all at the service of the son of the Great White Raj, and as the Prince goes past, the old man follows him with a very kindly expression. I must say that these people's jewels interest me more than their expressions ; but this one man's face was exceptional, and he was lean ! You see the thing above these people, that is the punkah ; when it waggles about it makes a cold draught and you get hot with annoyance.

Immediately the Prince passed, the crowd pressed towards a side room for champagne and iced drinks, the native Princes gallantly leading the charge. At the start we were all pretty level, but we Britons made a bad finish, and the native waiters and champagne were somewhat exhausted when we came in, but for what we did receive we are truly thankful, for it was sorely needed.

How we got home again now seems like a dream. I have just a vague recollection of hours and hours in the warm dusk, and crowds of people in evening dress waiting till their carriages came up. Perhaps the arrangements could not have been better ? Some of us dozed, some smoked Government House cheroots, which were good, and the time passed. All conversation gradually stopped, and you only heard the number of the gharry or carriage shouted out with a rich brogue and sometimes a little stifled joke and a "Chelo !" which seems to stand for "All right," "Go ahead," "Look sharp," or "Go on and be damned to you," according to intonation and person addressed. I do not quite understand how it took such hours to get everyone away, and I do not understand how we ever managed to get up that vast square staircase up the enormous central tower of the Taj Hotel, for G. was deadly tired, so of course the lift wasn't working—it looked so big and grey, and silent in the cold light of morning.

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Then to sleep, and tired dreams of the whole day and evening ; I dreamt I was in a Government House and the guests had gone and I met a dream Prince and a dream of an A.D.C. in exquisite uniform who said, "quai hai," and in an instant there were dream drinks, and cheroots such as one used to be able to get long ago, and we planned ways to remedy abuses, and the greatest was the abuse of the Royal Academical privileges ; and at such length we went into this, that this morning I wrote out the whole indictment and it covered six of these pages, and so it is too long to insert here. And our remedy as it was in a dream was at once effective—sculpture and painting became as free and as strong an influence in our national life in Britain as literature is at this moment—then came a frightful explosion ! and I awoke, and the sun was blazing out of a blue sky through the open windows—then it came again, a terrific bang ! and the jalousies rattled and the whole of the Taj Hotel shook for the war ships were saluting The Prince of Wales, and he and his aides-de-camp and all the officials in his train had been up for hours, "doing their best to serve their country and their King," whilst we private people slumbered.

But whither have I strayed in this discourse ? Am I not rather wandering from the point, as the cook remarked to the eel, telling dreams instead of making notes on a cold weather tour as I proposed ; so I will stop here, and tell what, by travel and conference, I have observed about Royal functions.

The day has passed to the accompaniment of "God bless the Prince of Wales," and gun firing, and "God save the King," on brass bands, and more gun firing. Somehow or other "God save the King" in India, where you are surrounded by millions of black people, sounds a good deal more impressive than it does at home—perhaps there's more of the feeling of God save us all out here.

I find it impossible to remember nearly all I have

seen and heard in one of these bustling days ; I should think that even a resident, long familiar with all these everyday common sights that are so new and interesting to us, could barely remember the ceremonies of one day in connection with the Royal Visit.



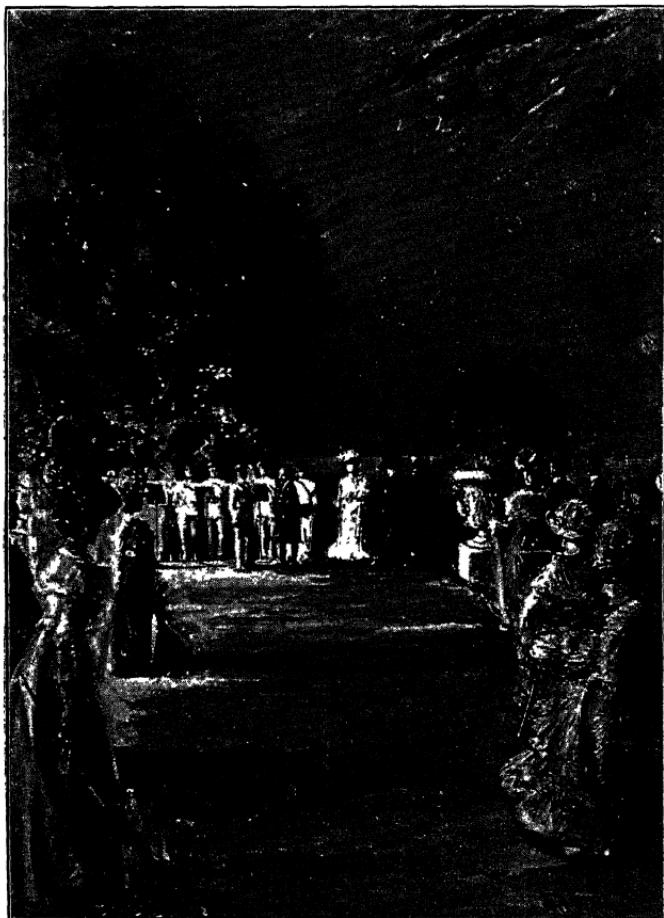
I remember a dock was opened to-day, and we were favoured with tickets which gave us an admirable view. Again there were shears, at the bottom of a place like a Greek theatre, very large shears this time, and a stone suspended from them. The Prince and Princess came down a wide flight of steps to a platform with two thrones on it. Behind them at the top of the steps were splendid Ionic pillars and a pediment swagged with great wreaths of

green. The Prince was followed by officers and ladies and leading Bombay citizens mixed with only a few Indian princes. Sir Walter Hughes of the Harbour Trust presented a magnificent piece of silver in the shape of a barque of the time of Charles II., with high stem and forecastle and billowy sails, guns, ports, standing rigging, and running gear complete, including waves and mermaids, and all made in the School of Art here to Mr Burns' instructions. We sat opposite, in half circles of white uniforms and gay parasols and dresses and dreams of hats. Behind us and all around and outside the enclosure were thousands of natives in thousands of colours. There were speeches, of course, and the Prince touched a button and the stone descended into the bowels of the earth and made the beginning of the new dock.

Then everyone got their carriages, gharries, bicycles, pony carts, dog carts or whatever they came in, as best they could, and we all went trotting, cantering, jambing, galloping, go-as-you-please down the central thoroughfare between high houses of semi-European design, with verandahs and balconies full of natives. The crowds on the pavement stood four or five deep all the way, and hung in bunches on the trees, some in gay dresses, others naked, brown and glistening against the dusty fig trees, stems, and branches. You saw all types and colours, one or two seedy Europeans amongst them, and Eurasians of all degrees of colour, one, a beautiful girl of about twelve I saw for a second as we passed; she had curling yellow hair and white skin, might have sat for one of Millais pictures, and she looked out from the black people with very wide blue eyes, at the passing life of her fathers. Most of us made for the Yacht Club for tea on the lawn; for the Prince, it had been said, was to visit it informally, so all the seats and tables on the lawn were booked days before!

It was rather pretty there; I should not wonder that Watteau never actually saw anything so beautiful. There

were, such elegant ladies and costumes, and such an exquisite background, the low wall and the soft colour of the water beyond; the colour calm water takes when you look to the East and the sun is setting behind you, the colour of a fish's silver. And the lawn itself was fresh green; trees stood over the far end of the Club House,



and under these the band played. When the lights began to glow along the sea wall and in the Club, and

under the trees to light the music, the Prince and the Princess, with Lady Ampthill and Lord Lamington, came and walked up and down and spoke to people, and all the ladies stood up from their tea tables as they passed, and I tell you it was good ; such soft glowing evening colours and gracious figures, such groups there were to paint—my apologies for the hasty attempt herewith. The Prince you may discover in grey frock-coat speaking to the Band-master of the 10th Hussars, the Princess and Lady Ampthill near.

I've worked at Saturday's pictures and Sunday's and written my journal, and seen Royal sights all day till now, and *opus terrat* and it is late and hot, and the mosquitos tune up—the beast that is least eating the beast that is biggest ; the beast that is biggest to sleep if it may.

CHAPTER X

. . . WENT this morning with Krishnaswami of Madras —Krishna is my “Boy,” and is aged about forty—to Army and Navy Stores for clothes. The thinnest I could get at home feel very thick and hot here in this hot November. I’d also to get photograph films, and guitar strings, and blankets for the Boy against the cold weather—just now the mere thought of a blanket grills one’s mind—also to book shops to get books about India, which I am pretty sure never to have time to read. In my innocence tried to get my return tickets on P. & O. changed to another line, and signally failed to do so. Then drew a little and loafed a good deal on the Bundar watching the lateen-rigged boats. These boats take passengers to Elephanta or go off to the ships in the Bay with cargoes of brightly coloured fruits. The scene always reminds me of that beautiful painting by Tiepolo of the landing of Queen Elizabeth in our National Gallery—I daresay one or two Edinburgh people may know it. The boats are about twenty feet long with narrow beam. Figures in rich colours sit under the little awnings spread over the stern; the sailors are naked and brown, and pole the boats to their moorings with long, glistening bamboos, which they drive into the bottom and make fast at stem and stern. It is pleasant to watch the play of muscle, and attitudes, and the flicker of the reflected blue sky on their brown perspiring backs as they swarm up the sloping yards and cotton sails to brail up. No need for anatomy here, or at home for that matter; if an artist can’t remember the reflected blue on warm damp flesh, he does not better

matters by telling us what he has learned of the machinery inside—that is, of course, where Michael Angelo did not quite pull it off.

As I sat on the parapet a beautiful emerald fish some four feet long came sailing beneath my feet in the yellowish water ; a little boy shouted with glee, and a brown naked boatman tried to gaff it, then a brilliant butterfly, velvet black and blue, fluttered through the little fleet ; and with the colours of the draperies, of peaceful but piratical looking men, the lateen sails, and sunlight and heat, it all felt "truly Oriental." To bring in a touch of the West, one of the "Renown's" white and green launches with brass funnels rushed up and emptied a perfect cargo of young Eastern princes in white muslins, and pink, orange, and green turbans with floating tails to them. They clambered up the stone slip with their bear leader and got into carriages with uniformed drivers, six or more into each carriage quite easily ; the basket trick seems nothing to me now—they were such slips of lads—but what colour !

At lunch we talked with Miss M. She gave us the latest ship news about our late fellow passengers—the mutual interest has not quite evaporated yet—gave us news of the ladies who had come out to be married. She had asked one of these as they came off the ship into the tender what it was she carried so carefully, and the reply was, "My wedding cake," and of a poor man, she told us, who came on at Marseilles bringing out his fiancee's trousseau, and who found on his arrival here, he had utterly lost it ! What would the latter end of that man be ; would she forgive ? Could she forget ? It was said that another lady, finding the natives were in the habit of going about without clothes, booked a return passage by the next ship.

Here is a jotting at this same landing place of the Prince and Princess going off to the Guard Ship, but I am so sorry it is not reproduced in colour. They were to have gone to the Caves of Elephanta across the bay, but

had not time. They apparently go on and on, without any "eight hour" pause, through the procession of engagements—it must be dreadfully fatiguing.

You see three Eurasians in foreground of the sketch, one of them with almost white hair and white skin, and freckles and blue eyes, he might be Irish or Yorkshire. The two younger boys are, I think, his brothers—they have taken more after their mother. All three are nervous and excited watching for the Prince. They are neatly dressed in thin clothes, through which their slightly angular figures show, and have nervous movements of hand to mouth, and quick gentle voices, slightly staccato, what is called "chee chee," I believe.

Beyond the boys you see a Parsi woman looking round. They are conspicuous people in Bombay by their look of intense harmlessness. The men are very tidy and wear what they probably would describe as European clothes, trousers and long cutaway coats and white turn-down collars. Some have grey pot hats, with a round moulding instead of a brim, but their ordinary hat is something like a mitre in black lacquer, and it does suggest heat! They all have very brainy-looking heads from the youth upwards, and wear glasses over eyes that have no quickness—as if they could count but couldn't see—and



they constantly move their long, weakly hands in somewhat purposeless angular fashion ; the women with similar movements frequently pat their front hair which is plastered down off their foreheads, and shade their eyes with their hands at a right angle to their wrists.

I suppose they and the Bengalis are the backbone of Indian mercantile business. Yet in "India," by Sir Thomas Holdich, I read that out of the population of 287,000,000 the Parsis do not number even one-tenth of a million. It seems to me that we have the Parsi woman's type at home in some of our old families, as we have remains of their Zoroastrian fire-worship. I've seen one or two really beautiful and highly cultured, but the average is just a little high-shouldered and floppy, and their noses answer too closely to Gainsborough's description of Mrs Siddons'. Mrs Siddons is just the Parsi type glorified.

We went to the ladies gymkana to-day more for the sake of the drive, I think, than for anything else—with the utmost deference to ladies, they can be seen at home—a few people played Badminton by lamplight ; it was dusky, damp, and warm, and heavy matting hung round the courts. Outside an orange sunset shone through palm stems, and flying foxes as big as fox terriers passed moth-like within arms length. From the height we were on we looked down over the Back Bay, and far below in the twilight we could make out the lights from a few boats on the sand, and fishermen's lamps flickered across the mud flats, and from far out in the west a light kept flashing from an island that was the haunt of pirates the other day. Two more lights we saw were glowing to the south-east in Bombay itself—one, the light of the native fair, and a slight glow from the remains of the Bombay and Baroda Railway Offices, a great domed building that burned up last night after the illuminations. It was madness to cover public buildings with open oil lamps and leave them to be looked after by natives — this huge Taj

hotel, dry as tinder outside, a complexity of dry wooden jalousies and balconies, was covered with these lights and floating flags—how it didn't go off like a squib was a miracle. I saw one flag gently float into a lamp, burn up and fall in flaming shreds and no one was the wiser or the worse. The faintest breath of air one way or the other and the other flags would have caught fire, and in a second it would have run everywhere.

. . . After the Ladies Club, pegs and billiards inside the Yacht Club, the Bombay ladies outside on the green lawn at tea, gossip, hats, local affairs, and Imperialism, and beyond them the ships of the fleet picked out with electric lights along the lines of their hulls and up masts and funnels like children's slate drawings.

It was interesting to come from the street and the crowds of Parsis and natives all so slenderly built and watch the British youth in shirt sleeves and thin tweeds playing billiards—they were not above the average physique of their class, mostly young fellows who had already been through campaigns—and you noted the muscles showing through their thin clothes and compared them with native figures, and it did not seem surprising that one of them could keep in order quite a number of such wisps as the billiard markers for example. But up north they say the natives are stronger and bigger than here.

Every now and then a boy passed round bags of chalk on hot water enamelled plates to dry the players' hands and cues, which gives one an idea of the damp heat of Bombay.

. . . Now my friend says he's off to dress, and we go into the dressing-room—that is a sight for a nouveau! Dozens of dark men in white linen clothes and turbans are waiting on these little chaps from home, as they drop in. They are tubbed and towelled, shirts studded and put on, and are fitted without hardly lifting a hand themselves till they put the finishing touch to hair and moustache at the glasses and dressing-tables that are fixed round the

pillars—sounds like effeminacy, but it is not, for it is far more tiring for a man to be dressed here by two skilful servants than it is to dash into his clothes at home by himself. If you were to dress here without help you might as well have dropped into your bath all standing, you would be so wet and uncomfortable ; but all the same I think it is stupid the way we people cling to a particular style of evening dress regardless of circumstances.

Then home to the Taj in the dusk through a crowd of natives jammed tight on the Bundar, all looking one way breathlessly at the fleet's fireworks and search-lights. You touch them on the shoulder and say, "With your leave," and they make way most politely, and you wonder if it is because you are British or because they have bare toes.

I went to the theatre in the evening, a native Theatre Royal. None of my relations or friends seemed interested, so I availed myself of the kind offer of guidance given me by a fellow artist, an amateur painter, but a professional cutter of clothes. I expected something rather picturesque, possibly rather squalid, but found it intensely interesting and characteristic and very clean, a cross between a little French theatre, say in Monte Parnasse, and one of the lesser London theatres. The acting was French in style and expressive, and full of humour and frankness, and there was a quaint decorative style in all the tableaux and in the actors' movements that made me think rather of Persian figures in decorations than of India. There was a parterre and a wide gallery, in which we got back seats ; the audience were all men and well-dressed, and laughed heartily at the points. These I was fortunate enough to have most patiently described to me by a Syrian who sat beside me, apple-faced and beaming, pleased with the play and himself as interpreter. Besides his valued assistance, I had from the doorkeeper a résumé of the plot printed in English ; my acquaintance was less fortunate, for, owing to the house being full, we

had to separate to get seats, and I fear he lost a good deal of the interest. The Syrian gave me the strong points of the different actors, and told me that he himself was an importer of gold leaf and thread ; he had, I think, one of the jolliest faces I have ever seen. The most simple and telling effect was when the Prime Minister found his young master sickened of love for a beautiful lady, and sent to the bazaar for musicians and dancers ; they came and arranged themselves facing the audience in the front of the stage in a perfectly decorative arrangement, struck in a moment. Every turn of hand and poise of body and arrangement of colour suggested the smiling figures you see on Persian illuminations. I forgot the effect on the Prince—I wonder he didn't die before we left ; he had been acting hours before we came, and we only saw a portion of the play—left at twelve, and must have been there three hours ! As we drove home the bazaars were still busy. One street struck me as peculiarly quiet. There were Japs at balconies of low two-storied doll-houses, silhouetted against lamplight which shone through their red fans and pink kimonos, and other shabby houses with spindle-shanked darker natives, in white draperies, also some larger people dimly seen on long chairs, who my friend said, were probably French—European at least. One or two groups of rather orderly sailors, and a soldier or two, were all the people on the street, and the only sound was “Come eer, come eer” from the balconies in various accents. The Edinburgh café, I noticed, loomed large and dark and very respectable looking in the middle of the street. I suppose you could get drinks there on week days ; my companion, the cutter, did not take any drinks, so I think he must be thinking of marriage. He was very interested in Art—what a bond that is, wider than freemasonry, what good fellows artists are to each other the world over—till they become Associates. This tailor-was turned-out of London by the aliens ; he spoke gently and pathetically of the way

the unscrupulous and insinuating foreigner works out the home-bred honest man from London. "If all was known," he said, "aliens would be restricted;" and Blessed are the meek, I thought, for they shall inherit the earth — if they only live long enough.

CHAPTER X A

17th.—Everyone on the Apollo Bundar and in Bombay waited for the guns to announce the arrival of the new Viceroy, and for The Mail ; to mothers and fathers just out, letters from little ones by the mail was perhaps the more important event. Maharajahs, aide - de - camps, generals, and hosts of officials were all trying to keep cool, to speed the parting Viceroy, and welcome his successor with all proper ceremony. To understand and describe how this was done is beyond my powers, therefore I must content myself with a note here and there. It struck me as improper that the cheers which welcomed the new Viceroy had practically to do duty for the departure of Lord Curzon. They say, “ Le roi est mort, vive le Roi,” but in this case, “ Le Roi ” wasn’t dead, but on the contrary must have been painfully alive to the sounds of cannons booming and cheers ringing to welcome his successor. I’d have had three or four days decent calm for the Empire to note the departure of so great an actor in its history. Then, after silence and fasting ; fresh paint and flags for the new arrival !

Monday afternoon.—Guns fire, and the new Viceroy on the P. & O. steamer arrives in the bay. As she steams through the fleet, the hot air resounds with thunder of guns, and smoke accumulates. Now she is passing the *Renown* and *Terrible*, and the smoke hangs so thick that the hills and ships are almost hidden, and you can only see the yellow flashes through the banks of grey smoke.

As Lord Minto landed at the Bundar, the sun was setting and the lamps were lit, and a soft breeze offshore floated out the flags against the glow of the sunset.

18th.—Made a jotting of the departure of Lord Curzon from the Apollo Bundar. It was a very brilliant affair ; any number of white uniforms sparkling with gold, and ladies in exquisite dresses, and with cameras with which they shot the departing couple from the stone buttresses. Lady Curzon was in soft silk and muslin crêpe-de-chine, I think, a colour between pale green and violet, possibly a little of both. It was a very pretty dress and with a parasol to match. They went down the steps and the red carpet to the cheers of people on the pier. This effective carpet with the white edge has figured a good deal lately in various ceremonies ; the Prince and Princess went up and down it, and Viceroys and Vicereines, and many Generals and Maharajahs. It ought to be preserved by the municipality.

I thought I'd condescend just for once to try a photo on this occasion, as Lord Curzon went down the steps to the tender, and I believe I lost in consequence, by the fraction of a second, a mental picture that I'd have treasured for the rest of my days and have possibly reduced to paint. Just as the whole scene was coming to a point when the least movement on the part of the principal figures one way or the other would take away from the effect ; when Lord Curzon turned on the landing in the middle of the steps to say farewell, I had to look down at my pesky little camera to pull the trigger ! So my mind is left blank just where I know there should be a telling arrangement, just such a moment as that painted in "The Spears," the Breda picture, where the principal actors and the others are caught in the very nick of time—the camera will now rest on the shelf beside a rhyming dictionary and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Lord Curzon said a few words to the people near him before going down the last steps into the launch, and it in the meantime gently and perseveringly smoked the ticket-holders on the buttress of the pier opposite us ; and we ticket-holders and G. P. on our buttress smiled at

their pained expressions—our time was to come. It stopped smoking, held its breath as it were, and came slowly under us, and Lady Curzon looked up from under the awning in the stern with a charming smile, and all our topees came off or white gloved hands went up in salute to beautiful white helmets—and our turn came!—the launch gave a snort, and we felt a pleasant, cool rain from condensed steam, and thought it refreshing as it fell on our faces. Then we grinned as we looked at our neighbours ; and then realized that we too were black as sweeps, topees, white helmets, and uniforms all covered with a fine black oily rain. I've a new topee to charge against one or other of the Viceroys or Government—General Pretyman hardly looked his name—and during the rest of the function of the return from the Bundar of Lord Minto and his retainers, you could tell by his grey speckled side what position in the preceding function a spectator had occupied. A Parsi, in neat black frock-coat and Brunswick black hat, and dark face, remarked to me with a smile, “You see the advantage of a little colour,”—bit of a wag I thought !

Altogether it was a very A.l. sight the colour Veronesque ; the troops, rajahs, beautiful ladies in exquisite latest dresses, and the variety of type, European and native, made a splendid subject for a historical picture.

Then the new Viceroy left the Shamiana on the Bundar after making a speech, which I was sorry I did not hear, for I was so engaged looking at things, and longing to have some method of putting down colours without looking at one's hand, as you can touch notes on a musical instrument. Can no inventor make something to do this—something to lie in the palm and bring all colours and divisions of colour ready made to the finger tips so that you might put them down in a revelry of colour as unconsciously and freely as the improvisator can use the notes on the piano to express his feeling.

There is more cheering and more gun firing and carriages dash up to the front of the Shamiana and its white Eastern arches that have done so much service this week, and Lord Minto drives off. It is most interesting seeing the Borderer who is to be Warden of the Indian Peninsula for the next five years. Lady Minto follows, with her daughters behind her. They stand in the full light, white pillars on either side and red light filtering through hangings behind. White uniformed brown-faced officers follow in attendance with glitter of gold and waving white and red feathers. Lady Minto wears a very big wide hat, blue and white ostrich feathers under the brim—her daughters are in bright summery colours; the three drive off in an open carriage with an honoured soldier.

Then soldier after soldier in gay uniforms with floating white and scarlet cock feathers drove off in carriages, dog carts, and motors, followed by city officials, Port trustees, doctors, lawyers, and smaller wigs till vanishing point might have been marked, I suppose, by the official artist did the Empire run to such an extravagance. Then more carriages glittering in gold came up, and old, and fat, young, and thin, genial, and haughty Indian princes, covered with gold and jewellery, got in or were helped in, and footmen in gorgeous clothes and bare feet jumped up in front and behind, and off they went, the big princes leading with horsemen and drawn swords behind them. Smaller carriages followed till you come down to victorias with perhaps just one syce. Then the Poona Horse, beautifully mounted, in dark blue, red, and gold, with drawn swords rode past at a very quick trot, now and then breaking into a canter with a fine jingle and dust that made almost the best part of the show.

I can't say I enjoy this damp warm weather here. It feels all right in the sun out of doors, but indoors after dark and in draughts from punkahs it is horrid.

I'd now give a considerable sum for one whole day of twenty-four hours clear Arctic or Antarctic sunny air and snow ; one would feel dry then, and lose the cold and fever that sticks to one here. The Turkish bath is the only place you can get really dry in ; at one hundred and fifty in the hot room you feel more comfortable than outside at eighty-two. The Turkish bath in the hotel is very nicely fitted up, but the native masseur wasn't a pleasing experience, his weak chocolate-coloured hands gave me the sensation of the touch of a middling strong eel ; his lean, lithe figure and the charms round his neck, and grey hair died brick-red I expect to see again in dreams—a crease in his teeth and venom in his evil eye.

It is curious that though you do not see any sign of this dampness in the air either by day or night, whenever the search lights from the war ships are turned on ; you see what appear to be clouds of vapour drifting across the path of light.

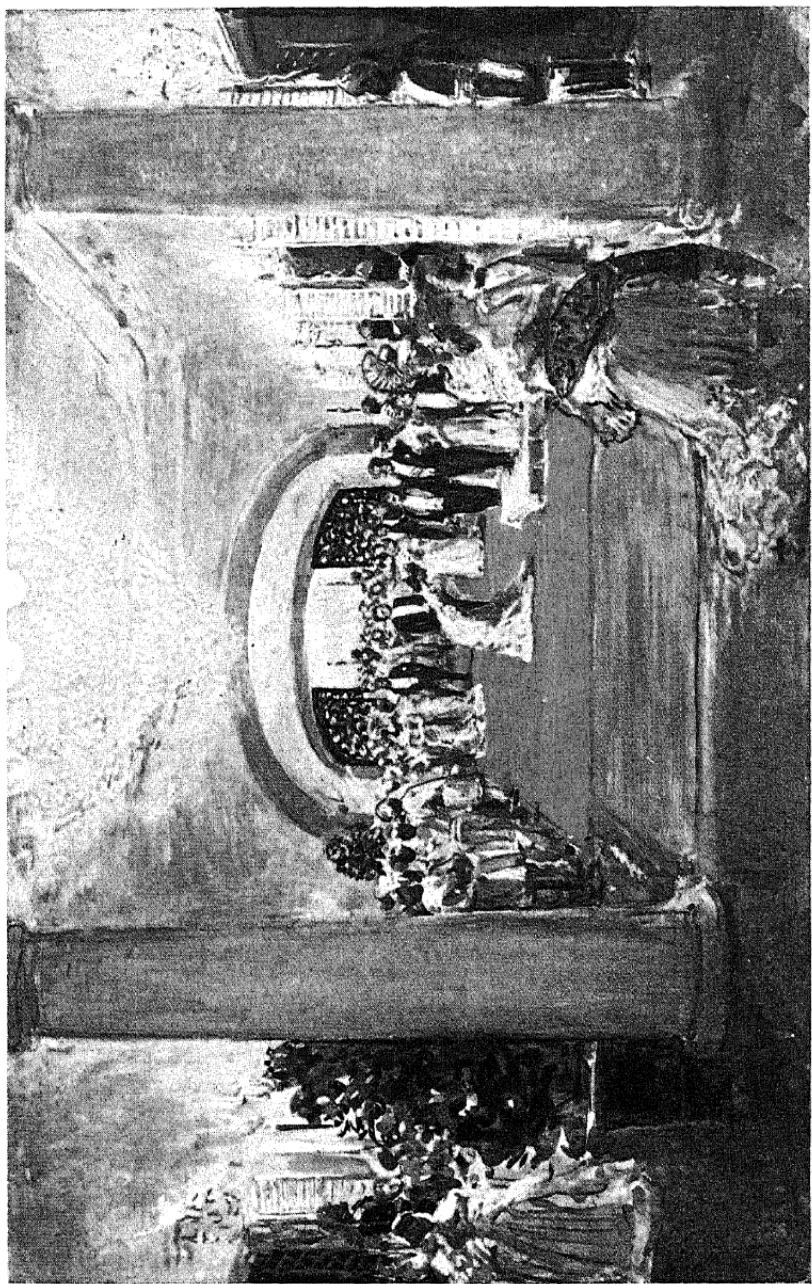
At night we drove to Malabar Hill to the new Viceroy's reception, and it was all pretty much the same as going to the reception given by their Royal Highnesses. The air damp, hot, and dusty, and for a long way heavy with the smell of roasting bodies, and this time inscriptions across the lamplit road were changed to "God bless our new Viceroy ;" but we had the same waiting outside Government House, met the same people and heard much the same talk about Lord Curzon's Byculla speech and about this one and the other. "So and so is looking well isn't he ?" "Yes, yes—ha, ha—laying it on a bit, isn't he ! Must be a stone heavier since his leave—takes his fences though they say like a man. Oh ! excellent speech. They must be tired—poor people—hear they were very pleased with our decorations. Well, you know they weren't bad, were they ?" Of course the "excellent speech" was Lord Curzon's farewell, and "They" stands for their Royal Highnesses.

I noticed some Parsi ladies rather better looking than

I had already seen. One was really beautiful, allowing a decimal point off her nose. This beauty moved briskly and firmly and had eyes to see and be seen. Many of them have slightly hen-like expressions and wear glasses and carry their shoulders too high. As they are the only native women who appear in public they naturally draw your attention. The Hindoos and Mohammedans shut their women up at home and glower on yours ; but the Parsi goes about with his wife and daughters with him in public, and therefore enlists your sympathy. These Parsis were driven from Persia in pre-Mohammedan times by religious persecution. I suppose their belief was akin to our old religion which the masterful Columba rang out of Iona. I don't think I have seen any men on apparently such friendly relations with their women and children. You see them everywhere in Bombay, often in family groups, their expressions beyond being clever, perhaps shrewd, are essentially those of gentlemen and gentlewomen.¹ The only other native women I have seen have their mouths so horribly red with betel nut and red saliva that you dare not look at them twice, so perhaps it is as well that their absence is so conspicuous.

I need hardly say that Mrs H. and G. were the most beautifully dressed ladies in the crowd, and made the most perfect curtseys, and H. and I the most elegant bows to the Viceroy and Vicereine. They stood on a dais, and as we passed in file we were introduced, and the Viceroy bobbed and Lady Minto looked and smiled a little, just as if she knew your name and about you and saw more than men as trees walking, and we bowed and went on, thinking it nice to see people in so great and responsible a position attending to the little details so

¹ The strength of intellectual capacity added to the material wealth which is possessed by this community have given it abnormal prominence, the measure of which may be estimated by the fact that out of a total of 287,000,000 inhabitants of India, the Parsis do not number even one-tenth of a million. See Sir Thomas Holdich's "India."



well, not forgetting that many littles make a mickle, and that those two servants of the Empire have been standing doing this for half an hour, and will still have to go on for an hour at least in this very tiring Bombay heat and crowd, and after a P. & O. voyage and landing ! Their total effort for all the ceremonies of the day before, and years to come, rather appalled me to think of. Bravo ! Public Servants, who work for honour and the Empire ; how will the Socialist fill your places when he is on top. As before, gorgeously apparelled scarlet turbanned waiters gave us champagne, and native princes hemmed the tables for it, and chocolates. Here is a little picture of what I remember—you may suppose some of the figures represent our party after getting over the bow and into the straight for the cup. We then wandered about, and admired the uniforms of the governor's body guard, tall native soldiers standing round about the passages with huge turbans and beards, blue tunics, white breeches, and tall black boots, all straight and stiff as their lances, and barring their roving black eyes, as motionless. From a verandah opposite the Viceroy, we watched the new comers making their bows ; ladies, soldiers, sailors, civilians, single or married passed, and never were two bows or curtseys absolutely alike, nor were two walks, but the Viceroy's bow and Lady Minto's pleasant smile and half look of recognition were equally cordial to all.

Our departure—hours to wait again for our carriage. H. stood-by in front, waiting for our number to be shouted ; fortune drove me wandering up the drive with a Government House cheroot, too fagged to speak to people, and lo and behold ! our carriage driver and syce, asleep in a by-way. So I brought it along and sung out 658 ! 658 ! and away we all got hours sooner than might have been.

The road is full of carriages, gharries, and dog carts. Occupants—officers, sailors, and soldiers in batches, alone

or with ladies ; white shirts and skirts gleam green in the moonlight—the road—dusty, stuffy, and the pace go-as-you-please ; past a lamplit bungalow in the shadows of trees and out into the open again and moonlight and dust —past a motor by the roadside, its owner, in court dress, sweating at its works —dust, moonlight, and black silk — a Whistler by Jove ! Now we pass a slow going gharry, and now two young hatless soldiers in a high dog cart pass us under the trees, down-hill at a canter, an inch between us, and half an inch between their off wheel and the edge of the road, and the sea ten feet beneath. Then along the lines of tents, with their curtains open and occupants going to bed. . . . We too must experience that tent life, but not in town if we can help it.

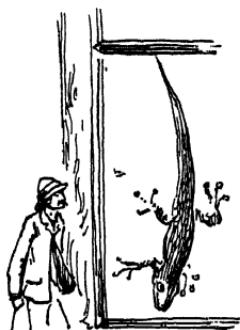
By all that's lucky the lift works still ! That grand stairway is a climb, in the sma' hours—a pipe and a chat and this line in this journal, and under the mosquito curtains to sleep—I hope till past time for church ; all the common prey of the grey mosquito, viceroy, public servant, private gentleman alike.

Yesterday being Sunday we had a day of rest and did no manner of work—only painted and wrote up my journal, and in the late afternoon G. and I drove down to Colaba, the point south of Bombay. This took us through the cantonments and past officers' houses on the low ground, amongst barracks, and soldiers in khaki and rolled up shirt sleeves, smoking their pipes under palms and tropic trees ; with the lap of Indian Ocean on the shore to the west, and Bombay on the left and east. This is not the healthiest or most fashionable quarter. Our officers cannot afford to take the best bungalows and situations which are towards Malabar Hill, for the Hindoos and Parsis, who owe their wealth to our military protection, can buy them out easily. I'd put that right “ If I were king ! ” So our officials and officers have to live where their pay will let them, in low lying bungalows

and expensive flats, or in hotels. Though not fashionable, it was a pleasant enough drive for us. A glimpse of the open ocean with the setting sun makes you feel that it is possible to up anchor and go, sooner or later—somewhere.

CHAPTER XI

HERE beginneth another week of observations. To begin with, I purchased E. H. A.'s "Tribes on my Frontier," feeling that a groundwork of study in this writer's popular books was necessary before leaving Bombay's coral strand and adventuring to the interior of this interesting peninsula. My library increases, you observe. I purchased Holdich's "India," and I now admit I own a red Bædeker-looking book published by Murray. With these three I consider I have enough reading matter to make me pretty "tired" in the next three or four months. At home I have only read bits of "The Tribes on my Frontier," out here everyone has read it; it is all about bugs and beasts and nature studies, the common beasts you see here, that no one notices after a time. To-day I timidly approached one of the ferocious looking animals he writes about. It was spread out on a window pane in the back premises of the Yacht Club. No one was looking or I would not have dared to exhibit an interest in such a common object. It was like this, a dream-like beast, with a golden eye and still as could be, except that its throat moved (the window and lizard, are reduced to about one-fifth of life size), and its eye meditated evil. I ventured to put the end of my stick near it, and it went off with such alarming speed that I hastily withdrew my stick. It had vanished into a crack, I'd never have dreamed a small crevice in a



window sash could hold such an extraordinary creature ! I must look him up in "E. H. A."

Colonel Sir Thomas Holdich's "India," in my humble opinion, is an absolutely perfect book of reference, of concentrated information on populations, their origin and characteristics ; geology, meterology, distribution plants with excellent maps printed by Bartholomew ; it might be called scientific, but for the charm of the touches of colour the whole way through.

The Murrays' book is very useful, but so dry that you hardly care to open it except in emergency. It has many references to the times of the Conquest of India and the Mutiny, and the editor, an Englishman or Anglicised Scot, frequently gives the names of individuals, soldiers and private people, who distinguished themselves in these times. For example, at the Siege of Seringapatam, where he mentions such well-known names as Baillie, Baird, Campbell, and M'Donald, two-thirds the names of my countrymen, and he calls them "English!" which makes me think of Neil Munro's skipper of "The Vital Spark" and his remark about his Mate, "He wass a perfect shentleman, he would neffer hurt your feelings unless he was trying." Writers in the days of the Mutiny wrote of the feats of the "British troops," their gallantry, and all the rest of it ; look up *The Illustrated London News* of that time, and you will see this is true. Why—confound them all—do they talk of "English" to-day, when they refer to Scots, Irish, and Englishmen, and the people of our Colonies ; is it merely casual, or a deliberate breaking of the terms of Union of 1707 ? Eitherway the effect tends to dis-union, it is ante-Imperial and for Home Rule for "A Little England." Ahem—may that pass as a "digression ?"—Now for more nature studies. I saw in the Crawford market this afternoon fresh fish, and dried and unfresh, and the vendors thereof. There were many kinds of so-called fresh fish, but the most were dried, to mere skin and bone, sharks and sprats, piled in baskets or

hanging in bundles. Diminutive wrinkled women sat on little bits of wet mat in rows, and chopped the "fresh" fish into little morsels with little choppers by the light of little cruisie oil lamps, that flickered and smoked beside them, and lit up their puckered little chocolate faces, glinted on their teeth and gums scarlet with betel, and threw warm lights on the customers faces, who leant forward to close range and haggled, and, I daresay, said the fish wasn't fresh—and if they had asked me, I'd have entirely agreed with them. Respectable looking Parsi men in tight broad cloth coats and shiny black pointed pot hats did this marketing—not their wives—peered through their spectacles very carefully, down their long noses at each little chunk. I hoped they could smell no better than they could see; and the grotesque little women slipped the minute coppers they secured under the damp mat on the wet stones between their feet. That was all very poor and small and sordid, but the grain sellers were pleasant to look at. They sat in nice clean booths, with around them an endless variety of neat sacks and bowls displaying all kinds of rice and corn and lentils and baskets of bright chillies and many other dried fruits for curries.

To chronicle some more small beer, I may put down here that we dined last night at the Yacht Club. The Yacht Club has little to do with yachting. There are models of one or two native-built boats in the passages and rooms; these have deep stems and shallow sterns, evidently meant to wear, rather than to go about. We did not hear of any yachting going on, why I do not quite know, as I'd have thought The Bay a perfect place for racing, and with its inlets a rather pleasant cruising ground, but perhaps the sun makes sailing uncomfortable. There are both lady and men members. You can live, dress, bath, and entertain your friends, or be entertained by them, hear music, read papers, write, talk, and walk about in pretty grounds, all pleasantly, decently, and in

order, for it is all very open and above board. I do wish we could have such clubs at home, I mean in Edinburgh, instead of our huge dismal men's clubs where never a lady enters, and food, drink, and politics are the only recognised interests.

Here you have talk on everything, and music (of a kind), and see pretty dresses and faces, and when you wish to be lonely, you may be so from choice, not from necessity. To a good club, two rooms I think are essential, a gymnasium and a music room ; and where out of France can you find them ! The talk, I must say, is principally about one's neighbour, which is quite right ; it is a most enviable trait, that of being interested in your neighbour and his affairs. Here, too, when you are tired of people, you can study beasts, they cannot bore you. I think E. H. A. is of this opinion. I have been reading more of his researches into animal life, and find that he says he has fathomed the intellect of a toad ; but verily, I cannot believe that ! Several of E. H. A.'s acquaintances have come round me as I scribble here in the verandah. A brute, a grey crow perched this moment on the jalousies, and let out that bitter raucous caw, that would waken the Seven Sleepers or any respectable gamekeeper within a mile ; abominable, thieving, cruel brutes they are, with rooks they should be exterminated by law. Once they were, in the reign of James the Fourth, I think, for he needed timber for his fleet. The law was then that if a crow built for three successive years in a tree, the tree became the property of the Crown. This has not been rescinded, so *Field* please note and agitate in your country and save your beloved partridges and the eggs of our grouse. Now two green parroquets have gone shrieking joyfully past. I suppose I must believe they are wild, but it takes faith to believe they have not just escaped from a cage ; they are uncommonly pretty colour, at any rate, against the blue and white sky ; they have taken the same flight at the same time these last three days, and

a dove is cooing near, a deliciously soothing sound. Persians say it cannot remember the last part of its lost lover's name, so that is why it always stops in the middle of the co-coo, co—

As it grew to twilight I went over to the Bundar and studied reflections in the calm, lapping water at the steps where so many dignitaries have arrived and departed, and made notes of the colours of the dark stone work and pier lamps against the evening glow and the reflections of boats' lights wagging in the smooth water.

. . . A launch bustles in from the *Renown* and brings up quickly—a white light between her two brass funnels and green and red side lights. The red light glows on the bare arm of the jack tar at the bow with the boat-hook, and just touches the white draperies of the native passenger as he gets out awkwardly and goes up the steps—a person of importance with attendants, I see, as they come up into the full acetylene light on the quay head, someone very princely to judge by his turban and waist—but a native's waist measurement sometimes only indicates his financial position.

. There is considerable variety of type and nationality amongst the few people who sit taking the air on the stone parapet of the Bundar. On my right are two soldiers—one an *Argyll and Sutherland*, with red and white diced hose and tasselled sporran, a native of Fife to judge by his accent; next him there is a *Yorkshire Light Infantry* man. They chat in subdued voices, people all do here, I suppose it's something in the sea warm air—have you ever noticed how softly they talk in the Scilly Isles at night? It is the same cause I expect—the soft warm atmosphere. They smoke Occidental (American) cigarettes after the manner of all the wise men of the East of to-day. A yard or so along is a bearded turbaned native; he is from up North I think. He sits on the parapet with knees under his chin, and a fierceness of expression that is quite refreshing after the monotonous

negatively gentle expression of the Bombay natives ; then beyond him are two Eurasian girls in straw hats and white frocks, and they do look so proper. Further over the Parsi men in almost European kit with their women folk sit in lines of victorias and broughams, and they are silhouetted against the glow of lamps on the lawn of the Yacht Club, under which the white women from the far North-West listen to music and have tea and iced drinks through straws. And the local Parsis *seem* quite content eating the air in the dusk—one or two of their menkind pay visits on foot from carriage to carriage—they have at least a share in the pom pom of the brass band—and welcome.

By the way, my piper friends who may read this, you will be amused to hear some natives of Sassun objected to having the pipes on the lawn in the afternoon at the Yacht Club—said they “couldn’t hear any music in them”—so Queen Victoria’s favourite, “The Green Hills of Tyroll” was turned on, in parts, and they were quite happy !

Now dinner, for there goes the Hotel brass band down below—*a cada necio agrada su porrada*—to me the pipes, the brass band to the South-erner, but for us all dinner—“both meat and music,” as the fox said when it ate the bagpipes.¹

We have home letters to-night ; “The Mail” they speak of over the Indian Peninsula has arrived. G.’s maid has a letter from St Abbs from her mother, who is anxious about her, for she says, “There’s an awfu’ heavy sea running at the Head.” Even at this distance of time and sea miles, we find home news takes a new importance, and are already grateful for home letters with details of what is going on there from day to day ; trifles there, are interesting to read about here, there’s the enchantment of



¹ To each fool agreeable is his folly ; and, the bag of the pipes is made of sheep-skin you see.

distance about them, and they become important by their isolation.

Nov. 22nd.—We conclude, that considering packing, calling on Cook, and a complete absence of any Royal function or Tomasha of any sort, that we have put in a most excellent day, in fact the best day we have had since we landed—and it was spent at sea!—at least the best of it was. I visited the Sailors' Home in the morning, which is a palace here where a sailor man who has the money, and doesn't mind the loneliness and ennui, can live like a prince for a rupee a day, and as comfortably or more so than we can in the Taj for heaps of rupees. Perhaps it was the suggestion of being at anchor in that refuge that made G. and me go off to sea this afternoon, and we are glad we did so. We looked at a steam launch opposite the Hotel which was full of white passengers seated shoulder to shoulder round the stern like soldiers; they were bound for Elephanta and the caves there, and we decided to go too; but they seemed so awfully hot even in shadow of an awning, and so packed and formal that we elected to take time and sail, in a boat of our own, with our own particular piratical crew, and lateen sails, and white awning. We were warned we might have to stay out till late at night! As it is said to be seven miles, I thought with a crew of four men, Krishna, and myself, we might by an effort even row home in time for dinner though it did fall calm!

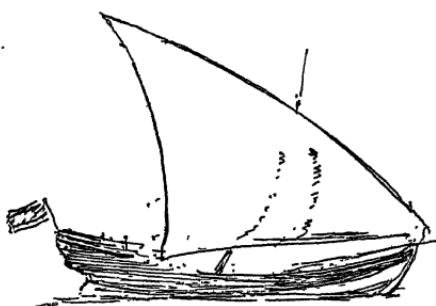
So we chartered the craft for seven rupees there and back—which was two rupees above proper rate—left our packing undone, and sailed for Elephanta. It was altogether delightful being on the water again the first time for many months—of course being on board a P. & O. steamer doesn't count, as that hardly conveys even the feeling of being afloat. The breeze was light and southerly, so at first we rowed, and the cheery dark faces of the crew beamed and sweated. These coast men are

nicer to look at than the natives on shore. They did buck in with their funny bamboo oars, long things like bakers' bread shovels, with square or round blades tied with string to the end of a bamboo, which worked in a hemp grummet on a single wooden thole pin.

What a study they make! Bow, Two and Three, have skull-caps of lemon yellow and dull gold thread, and blue dungaree jackets faded and threadbare. They are young lusty fellows, and Stroke, who is a tough-looking, middle-aged man, with a wiry beard, has a skull-cap between rose and brown, and round it a salmon-coloured wisp of a turban—over them there is the arch of the frogged foot of the lateen sail. All but Bow are in full sunlight, sweating at their oars, he is in the shadow the sail casts on our bow. We recline, to quote our upholsterer, in “cairless elegance” on the floor of the stern, on Turkey red cushions under the shadow of the awning, and I feel sorry we have spent so much time on shore.

We pass under the high stern of a lumbering native craft; its grey sun-bitten woodwork is loosely put together: on a collection of dried palm leaves and coir ropes on the stern, sit the naked, brown crew feeding off a bunch of green bananas. One has a pink skull-cap, and at a porthole below the counter the red glass of a side-light catches the sun and glows a fine ruby red; a pleasant contrast to the grey, sun-dried woodwork. Just as we clear our eyes off her, from seaward behind us comes an Arab dhow, a ship from the past, surging along finely! An out-and-out pirate, you can tell at a glance, even though she does fly a square red flag astern with a white edge. Her bows are viking or saucer-shaped, prettier than the usual fiddle-bow we see here, and her high bulwarks on her long sloping quarter deck you feel must conceal brass guns. From beyond her the afternoon sun sends the shadows of her mast and stays in fine curves down the bend of her sail, the jib-boom is inboard and the jib flat against the lee of the main sail. She

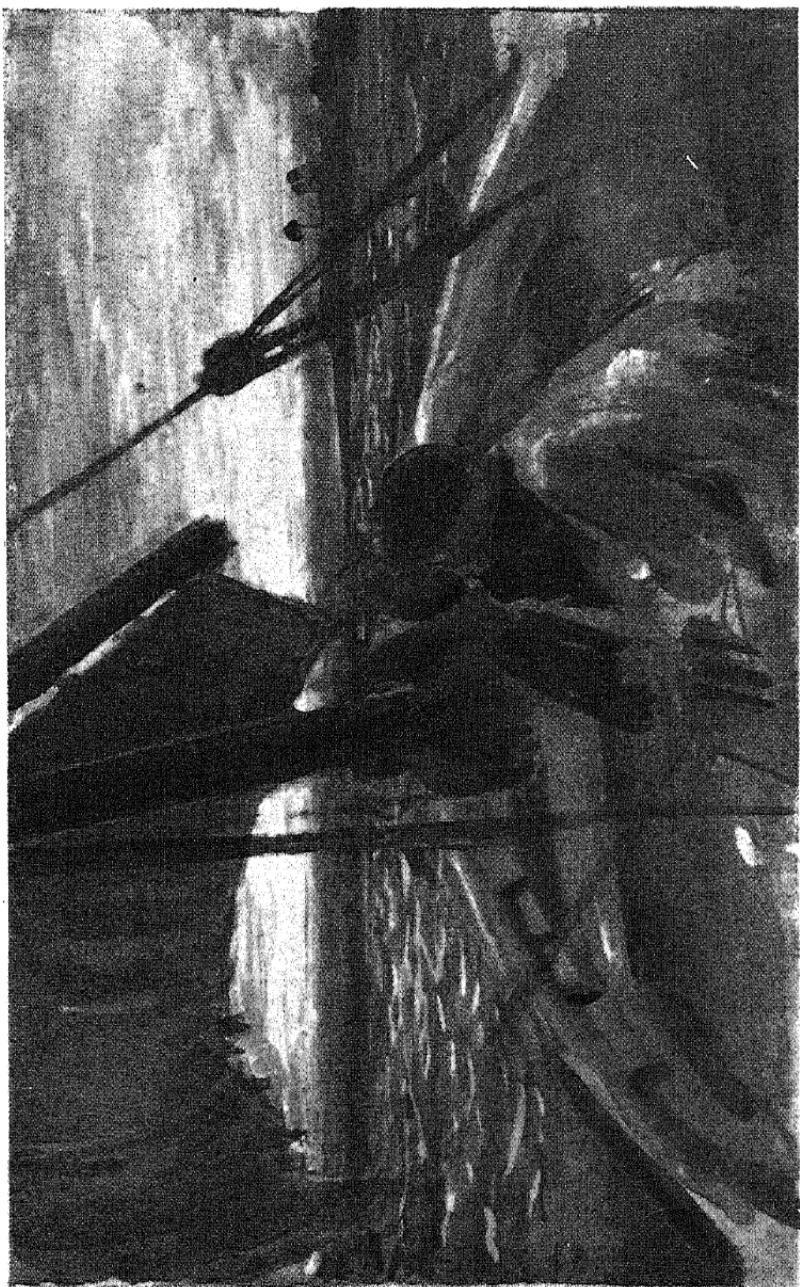
brings up the breeze with her, and our bamboo oars are pulled in and we go slipping across the water in silence, only the bows talking to the small waves. Now,

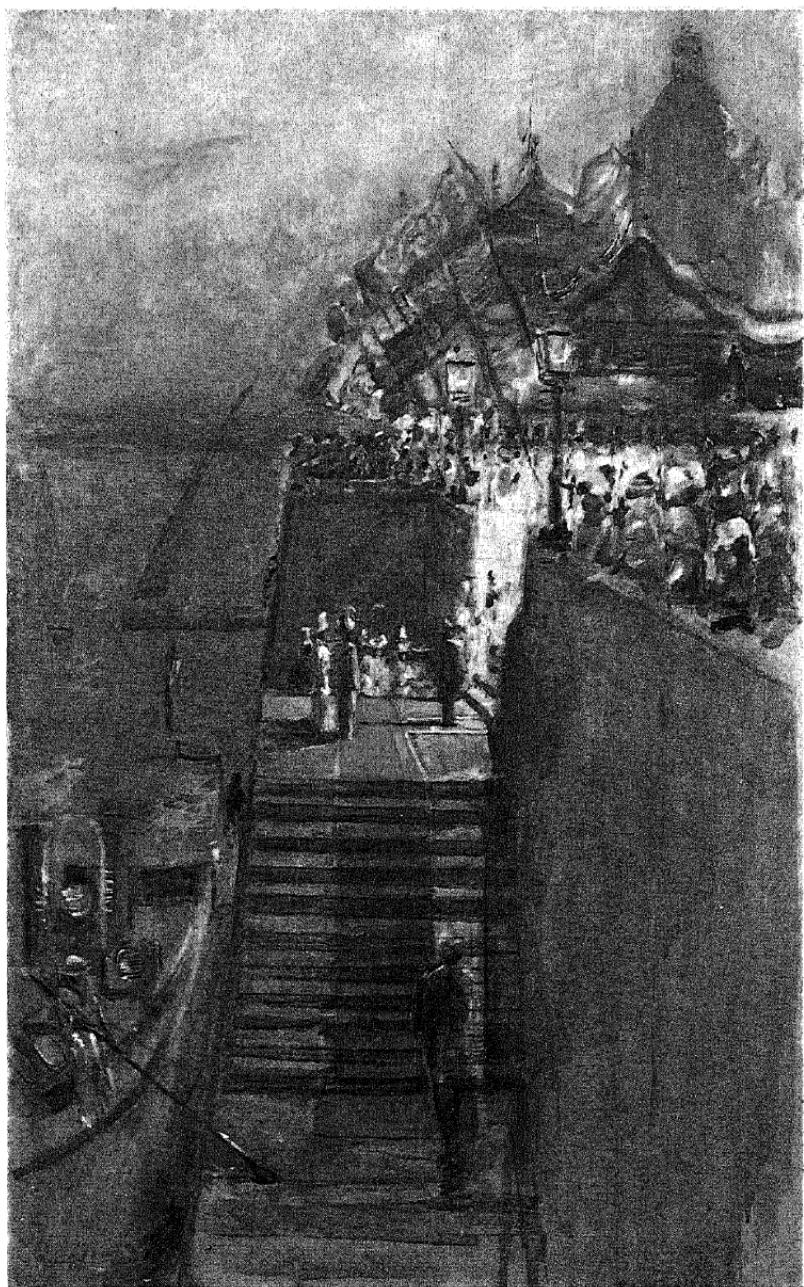


how sorry we feel for those other globe trotters on the launch, birling along behind a hot, bubbling, puffing, steam kettle—and so crowded, and in this heat too, whilst we extend at our ease in a

white and sky-blue boat, with pink cushions, and dreamily listen to the silky *frou frou* of the southern sea. The crew rest; and one brings out the *hubble-bubble* from the peak, with a burning coal on the bowl; it is passed round and each of them takes three or four long inhalations through his hands over the mouth-piece, to avoid touching it with his lips, and the smell of the tobacco is not unpleasant, diluted as it is with the tropical sea air. Now it is brought aft to the oldest of our crew, the master I suppose, a grizzled old fellow, who sits on his heels on a scrap of plank out at our stern and steers. He takes four deep inhalations and the mutual pipe is put away forward again. Our elderly "Boy" is a Madrassee, tidy and clerk-like, and a contrast to the pirates; and he does not understand them very well, but he pats the pipe condescendingly as it is passed forward, and puts questions about it with a condescending little smile.

Elephanta comes closer and we see the undergrowth on the hills, and it does not seem very unfamiliar; it is considerate the way in which Nature leads you from one scene to another without any change sudden enough to shock you; in the most out-of-the-way corners of the world I believe, you may find features that remind you of places you have known. Here the few palms on the sky-





line of the low hills, almost accidental features you might say, are all there is to distinguish the general aspect from some loch side at home. Our Stroke points ashore and grins, and says, "Elephanta," and we say, "Are you sure, is it not an island on Loch Katrine?" and he grins again and bobs and says, "Yes, yes Elephanta!"

I thought I'd written a remarkably expressive description of the carvings in the caves; if I did I can't find it, so the reader is spared. But I must say, before jogging on, that they are well worth taking far greater trouble to see than the little trouble that is required. I had heard them often spoken of lightly, but in my opinion they are great works of a debased art. The sculptured groups would be received any day *hors concours* in the Salons for their technique only. There are figures in grand repose, as solemn and dignified as the best in early Egyptian sculpture, others show astonishing vigour, and fantastic freedom of movement and of light and shade. They are cut in the rock *in situ*, hard, blackish serpentine, which is a soft grey colour on the exposed surfaces. In some parts the carving is as modern in style and free in movement and composition as some *tourmenté* modern French sculpture. But here, as in Europe and Egypt, marvellous talent has been used in the name of religion to express imaginings of the supernatural and inhuman, instead of being humbly devoted to the study of the beauty presented in nature.

Going home we sailed into the sunset, and it certainly was pretty late when we got back to dinner; in fact half of our little voyage was in the dark, in heavy dew and with red and green lights passing across our course rather swiftly; we had one white light, and the glow in the men's big pipe. We were pleased with our crew and they were pleased with us for an extra rupee, and altogether we felt very superior having gone in so much better style than other poor people, so down on the bedrock for time that they cannot spare a half-hour here and there.

CHAPTER XII

I DON'T know very well how we did all our packing and got away from the Taj Hotel to the train, but we did it somehow ; and possibly may become inured to the effort after six or seven more months travelling. Now we are reaping the reward of our exertions. Within less than half an hour from Bombay we are right into jungle ! I thought of and looked for tigers, and saw in a glade of palms and thorns where there should have been tigers, hoardings with "The Western Indian Army-Equipment Factory" and the like in big letters ; so I had just to imagine the tigers, and make studies from life of the Parsis as they wandered up and down the corridor ; I can see some point in their women wearing Saris, these graceful veils hanging from the back of their hair, but why do they and Mohammedan men wear their shirt tails outside their petticoats and trousers ?—I must look up "Murray."

To right and left we come on open country divided like an irregular draught-board into little fields of less than an acre each, with dykes a few inches high round them ; paddy fields, I suppose—the place for snipe and rice. Round those that have water on them are grey birds like small herons, with white showing in their wings when they fly—paddy birds ; have I not heard and read of them from my youth up, and of the griffins' bag of them. I have also read and heard of the Western Ghats, these mountain slopes we have to climb up east of Bombay, that run right south and which we are now approaching,

¹ Sanskrit "Gati" a way or path—Scottish "gate" is a way or path too.

but I had no idea they were so fantastically like Norman ramparts and buttresses on mountain tops, neither had I an idea that the trees and fields at their feet and up their sides were so green. We rattle along at say fifty miles an hour, not very comfortably, for there is heat and dust; but all along the line are interesting groups of figures to look at. Here is a string of women in red shawls against golden sunlit grass above a strip of blue water, and there again, a man just stopped work sitting at the door of a dusty hut of palm leaves and dry clay. He shades his eyes with his hand as he watches the train pass; how his deep copper-coloured skin gleaming with moisture, contrasts with the grey parched earth; then a group of children bathing and paddling, at this distance they are perfectly lovely. The young people are far more fairly formed than I expected them to be—famine photographs probably account for this; they are black but comely, though possibly closer inspection would dissolve the charm—here are people, men and women, stacking corn or hay round a homestead, a scene I have not heard described or read of in home letters or books about India; how the pictures unfold themselves all hot and new to me, and coloured, and at fifty to sixty miles an hour! Won't mental indigestion wait on good appetite!

We are going south-east now; Bombay away to our right over the bay, and the Ghat we saw to the south in extended battlements and towers, now shows in profile as one tower, on high and steep escarpments. We are still in the low country. May I liken it to the Carse of Forth extended, with the Kippens on either side, with the features and heat considerably increased. I am told I should not compare homely places I know with places unfamiliar, as it limits the reader's imagination; the Romans did so—said, "Lo! The Tiber!" when they saw the Tay; I must try not to do the same.

And as at home, the people at the stations become lustier and have clearer eyes and are more powerfully

built, as we get further from town ; that is not saying much here, for the strongest look as if a breeze would blow them over ; however, they may have their own particular kind of strength. I know my boy surprised me last night when he started to pack my various belongings ; the way he sat down on his heels beside each box and went through the work showed if not strength, its equivalent in agility, and a method entirely his own. He told me, " Yes, Sa, I do same whole camp one night, saddles, horses, bridles, whole lot camp outfit while you sleep." He has been butler to two distinguished generals, so I feel it must be rather a drop for him to valet a mere cold-weather tourist, but he does not show it, which is a point in his favour. It was a little awkward though the other day when he began to beat up to find my profession ; I forgot what he said exactly. It was something like, " Sahib General ? " and I said, " No, no," as if Generals were rather small fry in my estimation, and racked my brains how to index myself. I've read you must " buck " in the East—isn't that the expression ?—so a happy inspiration came, and I said with solemnity, " I am a J.P.,—a Justice of the Peace, you understand ? " and I could see he was greatly relieved, for unless you have some official position in India you are no one. He went on packing perfectly satisfied, murmuring, " Yes Sahib, I know, Sahib Lord Chief Justice, I know." Ought I to have corrected him ? Ought I to have told him seriously that I am an artist !—a professional painter from choice, and necessity ? He would have left my ignoble service on the spot ; why, even in Britain, Art is reckoned after the Church, and in Belgium, though respectable, it is still only a trade—Peter Paul notwithstanding.

After two or three hours in the train through this sunlit country, we conclude it is worth coming to see ; for the last hours have unfolded the most interesting show that I have ever seen from a train in the time. Outside all is new, and inside the train much is familiar ; some

English people near us sit with their backs to the window and take no notice of the outside world. What high head notes they speak with, and what familiar ground they go over. "Oh! you know Bown, do you—such a good fellah—good thot, I mean—went mad about golf—such a good gaime, you know—what I mean is—you know it's," etc. Quite "good people" too, probably keen on ridin' and shootin' though they may never have shot a foxth or a goo'th, or have even seen a golden eagle. But they seem almost happy, in a jog trot sort of a way, along the old trail—the Midlands to Indiar, and Indiar to the Midlands, with bwidge between.

We swing round a curve south-westerly and into a tunnel and out again and up from the plain—up and up—high rocky hills on either side with bushes and trees growing amongst rocks; another Pass of Lennie, I'd like to call it, on a larger scale. Out of the tunnel, we look down a long valley to our right with little dried up fields all over the bottom of it, fading into distant haze. Then another black tunnel opening into grey rock, and on coming slowly out—we are climbing all the time one foot in forty-two—we again look down a valley miles away to our left, and we can see the station Karjat, from which we began this climb up the Bore Ghat.

The aspect of this country makes me think of sport; the rocky hills, dry grass, pools, and cover suggest stalking or waiting for game, but perhaps there is still too much evidence of people—however, I must get the glasses out and see what they will show up.

Kandala station—a white spot, the guard points out to us far above us—then into a tunnel, and out, and we are there. To our right are ridge beyond ridge of hill tops, stretching away into the sunset.

Reader, please draw a breath before this next paragraph.

"The length of the ascent is nearly 16 miles over which there are 26 tunnels with a length of 2,500 yards, eight viaducts, many smaller bridges. The actual height accomplished by the ascent is 1,850 feet, and the cost of constructing the line was nearly £600,000."

Fairly concentrated mental food, is it not? and only eight lines from one page of "Murray," and there are one hundred and six lines in a page, and six hundred and thirty nine pages in the book!?

The sun sets on our right beyond a plain of stubble fields and young crops and distant hills, and in the sky a rich band of gold, veined with vermillion, lies above a belt of violet, and higher still a star or two begin to glitter in the cold blue. To us newcomers, this first sunset we have seen in India in the open over the high plains filled us with new and almost solemn interest. But why the feeling was new or strange would be hard to say; sunsets the world over are alike in many ways, but the feelings stirred are as different as the lands and the people over which they set.

A little later we (I should say I, in this case) had quite an adventure at a dusky siding in this tableland of the Dekkan. As I hastened to our carriage a beautiful lady bowed to me, a stranger in a far land! And I bowed too, and said, "How do you do, we met on the *Egypt* of course!" and she said, "You are not Mr Browning!" When I agreed it was only "me"—she expressed some surprise, for she is shortly to visit my brother down the line at Dharwar, and her chaperone had just been staying there. One of us possibly remarked the world is small. Later we all foregathered in an excellent little dining-car on the S. M. R.¹ line, and discussed family histories, and the incident made us feel quite at home. Everyone seems to know everyone else out here, and if they don't they very soon do, and all seem sworn to make the best of each other, and make things "go." It is so admirable; even though you may feel as a newcomer, a little uncomfortable crawling out of the shell of reserve you have brought all the way from home.

The air is much lighter up here than down in Bombay;

¹ Southern Maharatta Railway.

even after a bustling day getting into train, travelling, and seeing a hundred miles of utterly new sights, we feel far less tired than after doing nothing in particular all day on the coast. We stop at a station, Kirkee, three and a half miles from Poona. Here, there is a glove left on the line by the editor of "Murray's Guide," to be picked up by some Scot or Irishman; I have not time just now. He says that Kirkee is interesting as being the scene of a splendid victory over Baji Rao II; his account is concentrated and interesting. The names of the officers mentioned in the paragraph referring to the victory are Scottish and Irish, and he calls it English, instead of British—a little more sand in the machinery of the great Imperial idea.¹

Mais en voiture!—This narrow gauge on which we now are, is not half bad. We have a fore and aft carriage, the seats on either side we can turn into beds, and there is a third folding up berth above one of these. After the custom of the country, we have brought razais or thin mattresses, and blankets—an excellent custom, for it is much nicer turning into your own bedclothes at night in a train or hotel than into unfamiliar properties.

. . . How pleasant it is in this morning light after the night journey to look out on the rolling country. There are low trees, twelve to twenty feet high, with scrub between, and the varied foliage shows an autumnal touch of the dry season. Now we pass an open space with a small whitewashed temple in the middle of a green patch of corn; a goatherd walks on the sand between us and it with his black and white flock; he is well wrapped up, head and all in cotton draperies, as if there was a chill in the morning air, but it looks and feels very comfortable to us in our carriage: the sky is dove coloured, streaked

¹ First condition Treaty of Union 1707:—

"1. That the two Kingdoms of England and Scotland shall, upon the first of May next ensuing the date hereof and for ever after, be united into one Kingdom by the name of Great Britain . . ."

with pale blue. Now some women show in the crops, the corn stands high over them, and from this distance they are things of beauty. Their draperies are purple or deep blue, and their skins rich brown, set off by white teeth and the glint of silver bangles and brass pots. They have pretty naked children beside them. Every hundred yards or so there is something fascinatingly beautiful, so the early morning hours go past quickly.

Just before Belgaum Station, our delight in watching these new scenes is brought to a fine point by the arrival of a boy with tea and toast, all hot! Positively it is difficult to take it, for here comes a fort we must look at—miles of sloping coppery-coloured crenellated stone wall of moresque design. Graceful trees grow inside, and over its walls you see an occasional turbaned native's head, one is vivid yellow another rose; we pass so close we almost cross the moat, and the women stop washing clothes and look up. More park scenes follow, then market gardens and native cottages of dried mud, and we can see right into their simple domestic arrangements.

At Belgaum our friends of last night get off with their camp equipment, and I make a dive into a brand new suit in haste to bid them good-bye and *au revoir*, and as I make finishing touches, we steam away and the farewell is unsaid! These three lone ladies have gone to see jungle life; the eldest only recently lost her husband in the jungle—killed and eaten, by a tiger.

The soil in the railway cuttings gets gradually a deeper bronze colour as we go south, about Bombay it was grey or light yellow. Now it is from yellow ochre to red ochre, with a coppery sheen where it is weather-worn. The trees become higher and the glades more like Watteau or Corot scenes, but neither Watteau nor Corot ever saw more naturally beautiful tinted figures; their many coloured draperies are so faded and blended in the strong sun that it is difficult to tell where one coloured cloth begins and another ends.

At Londa we stop half-an-hour or so, and our Boy rolls up our blankets, and rugs, and we endeavour to concentrate attention on a dainty breakfast in a neat little restaurant car of which we are sole occupants. The car is made for two tables, each for four people, and a man and a boy, both very neatly dressed, cook and serve, so you see the line is not yet overrun, and it is still cheap, and comfortable. If I might be so bold as to criticise what you, my Elder Brother, may be responsible for, I'd suggest that the place to sleep on might be made a shade softer.—Yes, we are becoming effeminate, I know—we were becoming so alas, as far back as "the 45," when The M'Lean found his son with a snowball for a pillow ; still, we must go with the times, and even if the berths must be hard, at least let them be level. Please note, all soldier men who run railways in India, and receive my blessing in advance."

Our little waiter is a delightful study with his big turban and red band across it with the Southern Maharatta Railway initials in gold, white tunic, and trousers, and red sash and bare feet ; and can't he wait neatly and quickly ! We have figures to draw everywhere.—Here, within arm's length, at a station, are women porteresses, each a fascinating study of pose and drapery, and from a third class carriage just pulled up, out gushes a whole family, the kids naked from the waist up, and the men almost the same from the waist down. The women are in waspish yellow and deep reds, and they group and chatter in the sun, then heave their baggage, great soft baskets, on their heads—the women do this, the men have turbans, so they can't, and away they all go smiling. But better still, in the shade, there's a group of men and women seated, putting in time eating from heaps of emerald green bananas and sanguine pomegranates—how I wish I could stay for hours to paint !

Out of Londa the trees get finer and taller, and you see real live bamboos in great masses of soft grey-green, their foliage a little like willows at a distance. One cannot but

think of big game ; surely this is the place for sambhur if not for tiger : and there are trees like Spanish chestnuts with larger leaves and elms, and between the tall trunks are breaks of under cover, over which we get a glimpse now and then of rolling distant jungle and indigo blue hills against a soft grey sky.

Nacargali — Tavargatti — little stations one after the other all the way, a station about every six miles—still through bamboo forest — I think the bamboos must be 70 to 90 feet high. Now and then we pass glades with water. At one pool little naked boys and girls are herding cattle, white and cream coloured cows, and black hairless buffaloes, whose skins reflect the blue sky. The mud banks are brown and the water yellow, and there's bright green grass between the red mud and the soft green of the bamboos. Put in the little brown-skinned herds, one with a pink rag on his black hair, and that is as near as I can get it with the A.B.C., and there is not time nor sufficient stillness for paint.

With pencil in my journal I have little hasty scribbles—one half done and the other begun. There is a group of



women, with waistcloths only, standing on a half-submerged tree trunk in greenish water washing clothes, one stands the others squat, and beyond are cattle and bamboos. Along the side of the track there are wild flowers, creepers, and thorns with little violet flowers, and others of orange vermillion, and every here and there are ant hills, three or

four feet high, of reddish soil shaped like rugged Gothic spires or Norman towers. On the telegraph wire are butcher birds, hoopoes, kingfishers, and a vivid blue bird a little like a jay, the roller bird I believe. The king crow I am sure of—I saw and read about him in Bombay ; he is the most independent and plucky little bird in India, fears nothing with wings ! He is black, between the size of a swift and a blackbird, with a long drooping tail turned out like a black cock's at the end. I don't think he troubles anyone unless they trouble him and his wife, then he goes for them head first, and the wife isn't very far behind and gets a dig in too. There are doves and pigeons galore, and just before we came to Dharwar across a clear space there cantered a whole family circle of large monkeys ! What a lovely action they have, between a thoroughbred's and a man's. They were yellowish beards and black faces and black ends to their tails, which they carry high with a droop at the end.



Alnaver.—We pass iron trucks with native occupants—not bad looking—paler in colour I think than the natives at Bombay. Acres of cut dry timber, long bits and short

bits, are here for the engine's fuel. The smoke of it makes a pleasant scent in the hot dry air. The country becomes a little more open and not quite so interesting perhaps. Kambarganvi—flatter and less picturesque—nullahs, open ground and cattle, thin jungle on rolling ground extending to a distant edge of table land. We pass a pool full of buffalo, only their heads are visible above the muddy green water; on the shores and on their backs are little brown nude girls with yellow flowers round their necks; then Dharwar and the Elder Brother on the platform, and we heave a sigh of relief at the end of the first chapter of our Pilgrimage in India.

CHAPTER XIII

DHARWAR

DHARWAR STATION is not so unlike one we know within two and a half miles of the centre of Scotland. It is almost the same size but there is no village. Though not imposing, I understand it is the nerve centre of some 1,500 miles of The Southern Maharatta Railway.

As we pull up my brother, Colonel and Agent on the platform, remarks, "Well, here you are, you're looking well—have you any luggage?" and in a twinkling we are driving away, leaving the "little pick" of luggage to the boy to bring up leisurely. G.'s maid drives off in a princely padded ox cart or dumbie, and we get into a new modern victoria. I am not sure which is the most distinguished, perhaps the dumbie; it is at any rate more Oriental, and its bright red and blue linings, white hood, and two thoroughbred white oxen make a very gay turn-out.

The Agent's bungalow is wide-spreading, flat-roofed, with deep verandah supported on white-washed classic pillars, and surrounded by a park. There are borders of blooming chrysanthemums and China asters, and trees with quaint foliage, and flowering creepers about the house. The flower borders seem to tail away into dry grass and bushes and trees of the park, and that changes imperceptibly into dry rolling country with scattered trees and bushes.

Lunch is served by waiters in white clothes and bare feet, "velvet footed waiters" to be conventional,

and there is a blessed peace and quietness about our new surroundings. For weeks past we have ever heard our fellows' voices all the day long ; what a contrast is this quiet and elbow room to the crowd on the P. & O. and the gun firing and babel of Bombay.

. . . It is overcast and still ; away to the east over the rolling bushy country are heavy showers, but at this spot trees and crops faint for water. We doze in the verandah and wake and doze again, and wonder how this silence can be real, even the birds seem subdued. We notice E.H.A.'s friends are here in numbers, Mina birds, the Seven Sisters, King Crows, and one of his (E.H.A.'s) enemies comes in as I write, a yellow-eyed frog ; he hops in on the matting and looks and looks—I like the unfathomable philosophy in its golden eye. And my brother stops reading Indian politics and calls me outside to see a Horn Bill—all beak, and little head or body to speak of, he sways on a leafless tree and scraiks anxiously for his friends ; they are generally in companies of three or four. A little later, as I write beside a reading lamp in G.'s room, a lizard takes a position on the window, and out of the outer darkness comes a moth and lights on to the outside of the pane, and the lizard pecks at it—neither the moth nor the lizard understand glass—peck, peck, every now and then—trying to get through to the moth—how delightfully human—the perpetual endeavour to get Beyond, without the will or power to see the infinite reflections of the Inside.

As we speculate to-night as to where some of our neighbours on the "Egypt" may have got to by this time, the post comes in with letters from this one and the other. One is from Mrs Deputy-Commissioner. A few days ago we were altogether in Bombay, melting in the heat, and now we are towards the south of this Peninsula, and she writes from its farthest north : we are in a hot parched country, whilst she and the D.-C. are in camp,

sitting over a huge fire of logs in a pine forest. She writes, "To-morrow we enter a valley where five bears have recently been seen and pheasants abound," and the day after "we shall be at the top of the pass, 9,000 feet. Rosy snows and golden mists far below us melt into purple depths." . . . So this day's journal closes with pleasant thoughts of relatives and pleasant friends in many distant parts of this wide land.

. . . Sunday.—We arrived here on Friday—the silence is almost oppressive. Great grey clouds roll up from the east all day till evening, when they form solid bluish ranks; each cloud threatens rain which never falls. The stillness in the bungalow is only broken by the occasional cheep, cheep, cheep of the house lizard, a tiny little fellow that lives behind picture frames and in unused jugs and corners. His body is only about an inch and a half long, but his clear voice fills the large rooms and emphasizes the silence. Outside it is as quiet; there is the chink—chink of the copper-smith bird, like a drop of water at regular intervals into a metal bowl.

The Colonel and G. rode at 8 a.m., and I biked. It is not such interesting country here as what we came through in the train—rolling, stoney, with friable red soil, and hard to ride on. Many dusty roads meet at all angles; along these you meet herds of buffalo and cows driven leisurely by boys or men. Some cows, of errant natures, have logs dangling by a rope from their necks amongst their feet; they can't go off very fast or far with the encumbrance. They stir up the dust as they go along, and it falls and lies on the children till their dark skins have a bloom like sloe-berries. There are all sorts of birds to look at—kites, crows, vultures, hawks, eagles; with these you can't expect to see game birds, though it looks an ideal country, though perhaps a little waterless, for pheasants and partridges. When I stop I see the side of the road swarms with insect life, ants of various kinds, black and red, small and big, pegging along the

level, and up and down trees, as if the world depended on each individual's particular bustling. There are white ant hills like ragged heaps of raw chocolate—very hard and strong. I don't know what they are built for—I must consider the matter like the sluggard some day, if I have time, or read about them if that is not a bigger order. What strikes you at first about the white ant is that you never see it unless you lay its works open. His hard-sun-baked protections run up the tree stems or wherever he goes and conceals and protects his soft, white, fleshy body, and if you prise this casing open you may see him getting away as fast as his little legs will take him; really he is a termite you know, like a "wood louse or worm," and not an ant. A wonder of the world is how he gets the liquid secretion to fasten the grains of sand together to make his earthen tunnels. If he goes to the top of a house to remove furniture or the like, he builds his tunnel all the way up; and in a thirsty land the top storey of a sun-bitten house does not seem the place to get water: but I must leave this subject to the disquisitions of men of more leisure and greater abilities, and proceed to make some observations on, and jottings of, the figures on the road. Here are women bringing up great round earthenware vases on their heads and little round brass bowls in their hands, going and coming from a muddy pool in the centre of a waste of dried mud. They go slowly, the walking is rough for bare feet, for the clay is hard and baked and pitted with cows' feet marks. They drink and wash their bowls in the dregs in the pond, the water already so dirty that a self-respecting duck would not swim in it, and wade about stirring up the mud, then fill their bowls and march away with it for domestic uses—this sounds bad, but it looks a great deal worse. The figures though are charming, with balanced bowl on head, and draperies blown into such folds as a Greek would have loved to model. . . . But their faces!—Phew! when you see them closely, are frightful!

It is difficult to catch their movement; they are so restless. All people who wear loose draperies seem to be so; witness Spanish women, and the Spanish type of women in our Highlands and Ireland, how they keep constantly shifting their shawls.



. . . The Club in evening—a tiny club, quite nice after a quiet day in the bungalow. I was introduced to the five men there, who put me through my paces very gently; I just passed I think, and no more. "Play bridge?—No. Billiards? — Not much." I began to feel anxious and feared they'd try cricket. Tennis?—Yes, dote on tennis!" That smoothed things, and then we got on to shooting, and all went off at a canter. One of my inquisitors, Mr Huddleston, had been in Lumsden's Horse (the Indian contingent in S. Africa), and said he had helped

a young brother of mine out of action at Thaban' Chu.¹ Lumsden's Horse got left there and lost heavily. I knew this brother had been ridden off the stricken field on Captain P. Chamney's back under heavy fire, one of these V.C. doings that were discounted in S. Africa, and knew that two other fellows rode on either side to steady the sanguinary burden. So here was one of the two, and I asked who the other was, and he said, "Trooper Ducat, but Powell mended your brother's head; didn't you meet him in the Taj Hotel in Bombay?" And I laughed, for I remembered the doctor of the Taj, a rather retiring man, who generally sat alone at a table in the middle of the great dining-room; and that whenever he had friends dining with him, and I looked up, I was safe to find either he or his friends looking across in my direction, why I couldn't make out. Now it was explained! He remembered mending a man's forehead that had been broken by a piece of shell, and concluded from the surname in the Hotel Book, and possibly family likeness, that I was the man, and naturally he would say to his friends, "Look you at that man over there—wouldn't think he had lost half his head with a pom-pom shell would you? but he did, and I mended it!—It's pretty well done, isn't it? You can hardly see a mark."

. . . Then evening service in a tiny church, a quiet, monotonous, gently murmured lesson, and a few verses from the Old Testament about sanguinary battles long ago and exemplary Hebrew warriors—how soothing! Doors and windows are wide open, and moths fly in and round the lamps from the blue night outside. The air is full of the rattle of the cicada, which is like the sound of a loud cricket, or the 'r—r' of a corncraik's note going on for ever and ever; and the house lizard in the church goes cheep—cheep—cheep every now and then. No one pays any attention to its loud sweet note. Rather pretty Eurasian girls play the organ and sing, and look through their fingers as they pray.

¹ At Battle of Houtneck.

Then we are dismissed, and find ourselves out in the dark, and the longed for rain falling very lightly. The white dressed native servants are there with lamps and bring up the bullock carts, and ladies go off in them with the harness bells aringing. We have "The Victoria" of the station—and faith, barring the exercise, I'd as soon not walk! Did not Mr H. kill a great Russell viper at the club steps last night, and was not bitten, and so is alive to tell the tale to-day and to-morrow, and to show the skin, three feet long with a chain pattern down the back; the beast!—it won't get out of your path; lies to be trodden on, then turns and bites you, and you're dead in three minutes by the clock.

. . . To-day, Tuesday—could read a little—temperature down. Found it an entertainment listening to the voices of various callers in the centre hall of the bungalow, of which one half forms the drawing-room, the other half the dining-room. The bedroom doors open into this, and these doors are a foot off the ground, and fail to meet the top of the arches above them by about other two feet. The advantage of this I fail to see, further than that a convalescent or any other person who can't be bothered talking, can if he pleases, listen to others conversing; if, however, he prefers to sleep, he can't!

I got a glimpse of the gaily dressed callers through the transparent purdahs that separate my room on the outside from the verandah. They drove in white dumbies with white bullocks; the carts and harness glistened with vermillion, sky blue, and gold details; the driver, black of course, in livery, with a boy carrying a white yak's tail in black-buck's horn to brush away flies. I was sorry to miss seeing these kind people, but hope to get over the effect of sun, plus cold baths, and return their calls, and so increase my stock of first impressions of Indian life. "Erroneous, hazy, distorted first impressions," Mr Aberich Mackay calls them in his "Twenty-one days in India," that most amusing Indian classic. "What is it these

travelling people put on paper?" he adds. "Let me put it in the form of a conundrum. Q. What is it that the travelling M.P. treasures up and what the Anglo-Indian hastens to throw away? A. Erroneous, hazy, distorted first impressions. Before the eyes of the griffin, India steams in poetical mists, illusive, fantastic, and subjective." Crushing to the new comer, is it not. And he adds that his victim, the M.P., "is an object at once pitiable and ludicrous, and this ludicrous old Shrovetide cock, whose ignorance and information leave two broad streaks of laughter in his wake, is turned loose upon the reading public." This is as funny as Crosland at his best, say his round arm hit at Burns, the "incontinent and libidinous ploughman with a turn for verse"—a sublime bladder whack! But listen also to the poor victim, Mr Wilfred Blunt, M.P., and what he has to say in the "Contemporary Review."

"I became acquainted in a few weeks with what the majority of our civilian officers spend their lives in only half suspecting. My experience has been that of a tourist, but I have returned satisfied that it is quite possible to see, hear, and understand all that vitally concerns our rule in India in six months' time."

After all, who may write about India? Major Jones said to me the other day, "Why on earth is Smith writing about India—what does he know? he is just out; why! I've been here over ten years and have just learned I know nothing."

Then I said, "What about General Sir A. B. Blank's writings?" Blank is going home after about forty years in India. "Oh! good gracious," he said, "Blank's ideas are hopeless—utterly antiquated!" Therefore no one may write about India; Smith is too inexperienced, Jones has only learned he knows nothing, and General Blank is too antiquated.

This day we spent calling round the station. The

owners of the two first bungalows were out ; at the third the hostess carried wreaths of flowers, which she was on her way to place on her native butler's grave; he had died of plague. The next house was full of madonnas and maids worshipping the latest arrival in the station, a chubby boy of six months. The father had retired to a quiet corner, but seeing another mere man, he came out with certain alacrity and suggested a peg and cheroot. The next house was the doctor's, and the Mrs Doctor and I were just getting warm over Ireland, and had got to Athlone, Galway, and Connemara, when the ten minutes, that seem law here, were up, and G. rose to go, and I'd to leave recollections of potheen, and wet, and peat reek, and "green beyond green"—such refreshing things even to think of in this Eastern land, especially for us who are on the wander and know we will be home soon. But it must be a different feeling for those people at their posts, tied down by duty, year after year, with the considerable chance of staying in the little bit of a cemetery with others who failed to get home. But we must not touch on this aspect of our peoples life out here, it is too deeply pathetic. At the next house I did actually get a peg, and it was a pleasing change after buffalo milk and quinine for days : and mine host, who had been on the "West Coast," told me his experience of pegs in Africa. "The men," he said, "who didn't take pegs there at all, all died for certain, and men who took nips and pegs in excess died too ; a few, however, who took them in moderation survived."

Then we drove towards the sunset and rolling hills, and were overwhelmed with the volume of colour. Bosky trees lined the road, and the orange light came through the fretwork of their leaves and branches, and made the dust rising from the cattle and the people on the red roads and the deep shadows all aglow with warm, sombre colour ; I would I could remember it exactly. One figure I can still see—there is an open space, green grass, and Corot

like trees on either side reflected in water, and a girl carrying a black water-pot on her head, crosses the grass in the rays of the setting sun—a splash of transparent rosy draperies round a slight brown figure.

Friday.—Rode in morning with the Brother, painted and drove with G. in the afternoon, tennis and badminton at club, and people to dinner; that is not such a bad programme, is it? Not exciting, but healthy, bar the excessive number of meals between events,¹ and tiresome in regard to the inevitable number of changes of clothes. The ride we start after an early cup of tea. It begins pleasantly cool, but in an hour you feel the sun hot, and are glad to get in and change to dry clothes, and have breakfast proper about 9 A.M. The Brother then goes to office, which is a building like an extensive hydropathic, on an eminence to which on various roads, at certain hours of the day, streams of tidy native clerks may be seen going and coming. Of what they do when they get there, or where they go when they leave I have no idea; the country all round seems just red, rolling, gritty soil, with thorny bushes and scattered trees! But there is a native town; possibly these men go there, though their costumes are too trim to suggest native quarters.

There is such silence up here on the tableland at mid-day—only a light soughing of the soft, hot wind, otherwise not even the cheep of a lizard. A little later in the afternoon begins the note of a bird, like a regular drop of water into a metal pot, very soft and liquid, and when the gardener waters the flowers, more birds come round to drink. The house too is absolutely still; the servants drowse in their quarters in the compound; G. and her maid in a back room are quiet as mice; they got a sewing machine, which was a very clever thing to do, but it was a tartar, it wouldn't work—that was "Indian" I expect—so they have had a most happy morning pulling it to bits, and putting it together again—I wonder if they will make it go.

¹ Specially laid on for our benefit.

The most social part of the day here is the meeting at the club after the business day is done. I have not heard Indian club life described, but this club, though small, is, I think, fairly typical. Half the station turns up at it every evening before dinner; I should think there are generally about twenty ladies and men. You bike down, or drive, and play tennis on hard clay courts, a very fast game; then play badminton inside when it gets dark, and the lamps are lit.—I'd never played it before. What a good game it is; but how difficult it is to see the shuttle-cock in the half light as it crosses the lamp's rays—A.1. practice for grouse driving, and a good middle-aged man's game; for reach and quick eye and hand come in, and the player doesn't require to be so nimble on his pins as at tennis. To-night the little station band of little native men played outside the club under the trees, with two or three hurricane lamps lighting their music and serious dark faces, and the flying foxes hawked above them. Inside there was the feeling of a jolly family circle—rather a big family of "grown-ups"—or a country house party.

Dancing was beginning as we came away; men had changed from flannels to evening dress, and ladies had dumbied home and back, and a bridge tournament was being arranged. Think of the variety of costume this means, and grouping and lights. The brother and G had come in from riding, G. in grey riding-skirt and white jacket, and the brother in riding-breeches and leggings, and two men and a lady came in with clubs from golf. Other men were in flannels, and some had already got into evening kit, and it was the same with ladies—what a queer mixture. Everyone seems perfectly independent of everyone else, except one or two matrons who have the interests of the youths at heart, and bustle their "dear boys" out of draughts, where "they will sit, after getting hot at Badminton, and won't get ready for dancing or bridge." One cannot but admire the brotherly and

sisterly relationship that seems to exist between these kindly exiles, the way they make the best of things and stand by each other, such a little group of white people, possibly thirty all told, in the midst of a countless world of blacks.

Let us now discourse on duck-shooting for a change, and because it is a safe subject, and like fishing, "has no sting in the tail of it." One of the "dear boys" at the club asked if I'd care to go duck-shooting on Sunday. This "youth" is country-bred, and for length and breadth and colour and accent, you'd think he had just come out from the Isle of Skye, the land of his people, where you know they run pretty big and fit.

It was very kind of these fellows I think, asking me to join them. A doubtful bag doesn't matter—it's a new country and I feel as keen as a cockney on his first 12th—so I unpack my American automatic five shooter, beside which all last year's single-trigger double-barrel hammerless ejectors are as flintlocks! "Murderous weapon, and bloodthirsty shooter"—some old-fashioned gunners of to-day will say, just as our grandfathers spoke when breech-loaders came in, and that delightful pastime with ramrod and wads, powder flask and shot belt went out. So it ever has been! Since the day some horrid fellow used a bronze sword instead of a stone on a stick, and since Richard of the Lion Heart took to that "infernal instrument," the cross bow, because of its "dreadful power," and so earned from Providence and Pope Innocent II. "heavenly retribution," and was shot by one of its bolts.

As I write these somewhat discursive notes, there is a very old-world figure passing our verandah every now and then; he is our night watchman, called a Chowkidar or Ramoosee. He is heavily draped with dark cloak of many vague folds, and carries a staff and lantern; he belongs to a caste of robbers, and did he not receive his pittance, he and his friends would loot the place—and

possibly get shot trying to do so. He flashes his lantern through your blinds as you try to sleep. Then if he wakes you by his snoring, you steal out and pour water gently down his neck.

A hyaena or jackal has started laughing outside—phew!—what an eerie laugh—mad as can be—what horrid humour! I have mentioned a lady's husband was taken away from her and eaten by a tiger lately, somewhere about this country, so we begin to feel quite *in medias res*, though far from the madding town.

To-morrow we drive to our shoot—start at six! To drive in dumbies, about eight miles. But what does distance matter; it's our first day's shooting in India—duck to-day, black-buck to-morrow, then sambhur, perhaps, and who knows, the royal procession may not account for all the tigers! and I begin to have a feeling that if one came within a fair distance, and did not look very fierce, I'd be inclined to louse off my great heavy double-barrelled 450 cordite express and see if anything happened.



The above painted by Allan Betty Iris and Uncle Gordon.

CHAPTER XIV

Copy letter on subject of "Duck."



EAR B.—There are still a few minutes before old Sol gets his face under cover, so I am going to let you know of my first great day's Indian Shikar ! It was A.1. from start to finish, though an old resident here might laugh at its being given such a fine term. I know that it would have been as interesting to you as it was to me ; it was so different from anything we have at home.

I met a man at the club who said, " Won't you come with us to-morrow (Sunday) and have a try for duck ? " and I jumped —haven't had anything in way of

exercise, bar a little mild riding and tennis for weeks. These fellows are so busy all the week they put in the Sunday out of doors shooting. Don't you wish we could too ? You know everyone shoots here, it is free—one of the reasons so many of our best young fellows come out—men who haven't got ancestral or rented acres to shoot over.

Quarter past six, *mon ami*, was the hour fixed—I

shuddered ! By the way, most of these men were dancing yesterday afternoon till 7-45—at tennis previously, and at bridge till the small hours. Isn't that a rum way of doing things—the ladies dancing till after 7 o'clock, then dashing home to dress, and here at this bungalow to dinner at little after eight.

Turned out at a quarter to six—fifteen minutes later than I intended—fault of my “Boy”—tumbled into sort of shooting kit, and partly dressed as I scooted along the avenue through the park—compound I believe it should be called—the night watchman legging it along with my bag and gun I believe a jackal slunk past ; it was getting light—first jackal I've seen outside a menagerie—an event for persons like us ? When I got to the avenue gate where these other heroes were to meet me, the deuce a shadow of one was there—only a native with something on his head. So I did more dressing and cussing because I was ten minutes behind time and thought they must have gone on.

Gradually the light increased. Dawn spread her rosy fingers over the pepal fig trees that lined the road ; the fruit-eating flying-foxes sought their fragrant nests or roosts, and noiselessly folded their membranous wings till next time. And the native turned out to have a luncheon basket on his head so my heart rose, and by and bye a big fellow in khaki stravaiged out of the shades—a jovial, burly Britisher called “Boots,”—told me he was hunting up the other fellows, and that they had got home late last night—this about half an hour after time fixed—so much for Indian punctuality here-away ! After some time another shooter arrived behind two white oxen, taking both sides of the road in a sort of big governess cart. Then Boots, who had hunted out a man Monteith, came up in a third dumbie, as their ox carts are called here. These go like anything if you can keep them in the straight, but the oxen are dead set on bolting right or left up any road or compound

avenue. Boots told me: going to dine one night, he had been taken up to three bungalows willy nilly before he got to the right one. The reins go through bullocks' noses, so by Scripture that *should* guide them. We went off at a canter, and hadn't got a mile when Boots and Monteith's dumbie dashed at right angles across a bridge to the cemetery; we followed, missing the edge of the bridge by an inch,—pulled round and went off on the straight again—seven miles in the cool of the morning, grey sky, soft light, new birds, new trees, new country, no mistake it was pleasant. Here is a sketch (much reduced) the dumbie following us. As we went at a canter it was not very easy to do!



At the tank or loch we disembarked amongst a motley crowd of natives—got men to carry cartridge bags, and then we surrounded the tank, a place about three-quarters of a mile long by a quarter broad.

M. got into a portable, square, flat-bottomed canvas boat he had sent the day before, and his heathen boatman, who swore he could row, cut branches to hide both of them from the duck. This arrangement looked like a fair sized table decoration, a conspicuous man in a topee with a gun at one end, and a black white-turbaned native at the other. Away they went, left oar, right oar! I watched these simple manoeuvres from the far side, where, like the other guns, I was posted at the water's edge, in full view of the duck which were swimming

about in mid water, chuckling at us I am sure. The native's rowing was a sight! first one oar high in the air, then the other. I saw Monteith had to change and did both rowing and shooting, probably the native had never seen a boat in his life! When M. began firing at the duck at long range, they got up the usual way, straight up, and then flew round and round, high up. I didn't know whether to watch the duck or enjoy looking at the village scene opposite, for it was at once delightfully new and delightfully familiar. There were mud-built cottages among feathery-foliaged trees with wide roofs of thatch of a silver grey colour, and above them were two or three palms against the sky. Biblical looking



ladies went to and fro between lake and village, and each carried on her head a large, black, earthenware bowl steadied by one hand, and a smaller brass pot swinging in the other. Blue-black buffaloes and white and yellow cows sauntered on the sloping banks, watched by men in white clothes and turbans—it was all very sweet and peaceful in the soft morning light.

The ducks flew high of course, just out of range, but we banged away merrily at anything inside ninety yards! M. in the boat got within range of some confiding pochard,

and we on shore got a few by flukes. They kept circling round for a long time as the other tanks in neighbourhood were almost dried up. Then it got very hot and I for one was glad to get my back against an aloe for a little shade and concealment, and sketched, and fired occasionally to be sociable, as a duck came within say eighty yards. See sketch and the futility of concealment. I thought it very delightful—the shooting was not too engrossing, the landscape was charming, and the village life interesting, and the simplicity of the whole proceeding distinctly amusing. F., one of our party, on the other side from me kept potting away regularly. He was surrounded with natives; his ideas as to what was "in shot" were great! Still, he told me the natives always swore he hit. The duck out here don't seem to mind small shot at a hundred or two hundred yards more than



they do at home! Pretty white herons sailed round occasionally without fear, and sometimes I could positively hardly see for grey-green dragon flies hovering in front; there was one tern, or sea swallow—my favourite bird; but how came it do you think, so far from the sea?

Most of the duck had cleared off to other tanks by ten o'clock, so the fusilade stopped and we returned to the shade of a many-stemmed and rooted banyan tree

where the desert met the sown, and had lunch and felt quite the old Indian, eating fearfully hot curry pasties and spiced sandwiches, as per sketch.

My five shooter is quite a novelty here, so I had to take it to bits and show how it worked, or rather, I began to show how it worked, did something wrong, and had to take it all to bits on this inauspicious occasion.

We shot on languidly till about one, that is, sat in the heat and occasionally let off a shot at a very wide duck, and another member of our party took his turn in the boat with a professed oarsmen from the village who was worse than the first, so we gave up, one by one and dawdled up to the village, picking up some dead duck on the way. Here is a jotting of our retriever—a native who slung a bundle of dry pithy sticks under one arm, waded out, and swam along somehow, with an overhand stroke, not elegant but fairly effective.—I also made jottings of buffaloes in the water, all but submerged, water lilies, little white herons, and women in bright colours washing clothes in reflections! What subjects for pictures—rather shoppy this for you? The buffaloes walked sometimes entirely under water for some two or three yards—and then they came up and blew like seals!—by all the saints, isn't this just the Kelpie we have heard of from Sandy and Donald and Padruigh—and how "It" comes up from the dark water and the lilies in the dusk, like a great black cow, with staring eyes and dripping weeds hanging from its mouth and shoulders!



I found the party under the shade of pepal trees beside the inverted boat, and the lunch basket, sur-



rounded by the villagers of all ages. In front on the dust, in sunlight, a brown woman danced and whipped her bare flesh with a cord like a serpent, and another woman in soft, hanging, Madonna-like draperies, with a kid astride her hip and asleep on her breast, beat a tom-tom vigorously. The dancing woman's steps were the first of our sword dance—you see them round the world; she had ragged black hair, dusty brown skin, with various bits of coloured clothes twisted round her hips. Of the violent light and shade, and hot reflected light



from the sandy red ground, and restless movements, I could only make this ghost of a sketch. Behind the women was a box, open on the side next us, fitted up as a shrine ; in it sat an Indian goddess in vermillion and gold, with minor deities round her, all very fearsome. I was told it was a cholera goddess, and the dancing was to propitiate her and drive cholera out of the village. I'd fain remember the light and shade and colour, but it is difficult to do these unfamiliar scenes from memory ; of scenes at home one can grasp more in the time, for many forms are familiar and others one can reason from these—that they must be so—this last a risky business—and query : is it Art or Fake ?—forgive shop again, awfully sorry.

The drive home in mid-day sun with no shade was pretty considerably hot, through miles of unsheltered, hot, dusty road, but with regular tiger jungle on either side ! Some of us slept—for me there was too much heat and too much to see for that.



I think we got fourteen duck. There were pochard and pintail and one like a mallard. The pochard are good to eat here.

To-morrow we go South—both sorry and glad to go—sorry to leave the little social circle and glad to be on the road again. Again we have had a glimpse of how

quickly friends are made here. I suppose the extreme isolation makes one white man realise his dependence on the next white man, so that they naturally make the best of each other and become friends quickly.

Krishna bustles round packing things—bustles is hardly the word though, for his barefooted, silent effectiveness. And snoring hardly the word for the noise that son of a thief, the watchman, makes outside. ,

CHAPTER XV



OOD-BYE to Dharwar, we are on the move again, the comparatively cold-weather tourists take the road south to Bangalore. We jog along at a respectable rate, not too fast and not too slow, say forty-five miles an hour top speed, and twenty-five mean, which allows us to see things to-day

and remember what we saw yesterday.

Before leaving, biked down to the Native Town of Dharwar, a place full of interest, picturesque scenes, and somewhat sinister looking people—tried to make a picture of women and men at a well-head, a magnificent subject, but too difficult to do in a few minutes. There were men pulling up kerosene tins over a wheel, hand over hand, from the cool looking depths of the wide red sandstone well and filling goats' skins to sling on cows' backs, and women in sombre reds and blue wrappings, old and young, and rather monkeyish in appearance; still, some were not altogether bad looking. One old woman had almost Savonarola features, and the strip of blue from the sky on her brown back was telling as she and a young woman leant and pulled hand over hand at the rope. The water splashed on to the pavement round the well, re-

flected the rich colours of cloth and limb and patches of cobalt from the sky. The women seem to consider this is not a bad part of their day's work ; to come to the well-head and chat with their neighbours and show off their jewellery, and probably wouldn't thank you for a modern engine to pump up the water in half the time. They are dirty little pigs ; can you make out a little beast to the right, comparatively a superior, extra well-dressed beauty, with very polished black hair and a flower in it ? No, I am afraid not ; the reduction, or reproduction, obscures her charm completely. She looks round about her and rubs a family water pot with a little mud and water off the road, yet by her religion it would be defiled if my shadow fell on it.



I came away almost sick with the feeling of inability to remember all the movements of draperies and colours ; this country needs a Philip and a Velasquez in one, to do it justice.

On the way home I pass a tank with two wide flights of steps down to it, banyan trees hang over it, and

monkeys gambol on the ground, and about the dusty trunks. Up and down the steps women are passing with stately steps and slow, they loiter at the water's edge and gossip, then fill their dark earthenware bowls, lift them on to their heads with the help of a neighbour, and come slowly up the steps. The little brass bowls they carry



on hip or at arm's length glitter with lights that hit the eye like electric sparks. One figure alone would make an artist's study for days. The colour from the red soil reflects under their raised arms and under their cheeks and into the classic folds of their draperies, strong blue, and deep red, in their shadows and throw up rich reflections

to the undersides of the wet earthenware bowls ; the water laps over their brims, and the sky reflects like sapphire on their upper surfaces. . . . Who will say, that colour is not the most beautiful thing in the world—the very flower of love and light and fire ; the sign of preponderant kata-bolism or anabolism as the naturalist might possibly put it, to be perfectly explicit !

People dined with us, and inside we had music of the masters by a mistress of music ; and outside, some of us discussed names of stars ; and dogs and jackals were stirred to the depths of their feelings by the moon : one especially at the end of the compound howled as if it was in a steel trap. At the side of the bungalow the guests' white cattle slept unyoked in the deep shadows of the trees, beside their white covered dumbies, all soft and blurred in silvery haze except where the light fell on a splash-board and shone like a jewel. And in front of us Eucharist lilies and China asters drooped their heads and slept.

Though this is an express train we stop at lots of stations, which, of course, is just what we want, for there are fascinating groups to study all the way, and the slight changes in the character of the country are interesting. We go through first, what I take to be the black cotton soil, and later red soil again.

At one little station a Government official gets out of the train, a Deputy-Commissioner possibly, a dapper, fair man and a lady, a nurse, a fair child, and a fox terrier ; in the shadow of some trees I see an escort of lancers and some foot soldiers waiting. We wonder who they can be, getting out in such a measureless, monotonous tract of level country. They seem so fair and isolated in this vast country of dark people.

. . . The afternoon passes, and as the sun goes down the shadows of our carriages spread wider over the plain. The sky becomes faint rose in the zenith, over the cerulean

above the horizon, and the white clothes of the shepherds become golden, and the reds, yellows, and blues of the women's draperies become very vivid. We pass herds of cattle as finely bred as antelopes, all blurred into the glow of the late afternoon and the red soil. Then comes almost desert, flat as water, red gravel with bushes with few green leaves, and here and there a tree with its white stem gleaming against a long-drawn shadow. Over the horizon two hill tops show purple and red, then for ten minutes all flushes ruddy, burning gold, and vermillion, and the light goes out; and there follows a cold blackish violet that almost chills us, till the moon comes in full strength and glorifies the desert with its frosted silvery illumination. Little fires begin to burn alongside the railway, and we see groups of shepherds warming themselves and cooking. The third class passengers at the stations are tucking their chins between their knees and pulling their draperies, most of them scarlet, over their heads, and with the lamplight from above and the smoke of the bubble-bubble that floats over them they make very warm, soft masses of colour.

We stiffer people spread ourselves out over a space ten natives could sit in, and get under our blankets and feel uncommonly comfortable, take one more look at the blurr of moonlight on the silent waste, and address ourselves to sleep, fondly hoping we will remember a little of the beauty of the night 'against the "dark days made for our searching."

. . . The night passes, hour after hour — jogging south; at times we hear a voice calling in the wilderness the name of a station, which we do not know, and do not care to know; and there's a whiff perhaps of burning, a little like peat, from the fuel they burn here, which at home the farmers spread on their fields to make them "bring forth unnatural fruit."¹

¹ Josephus.

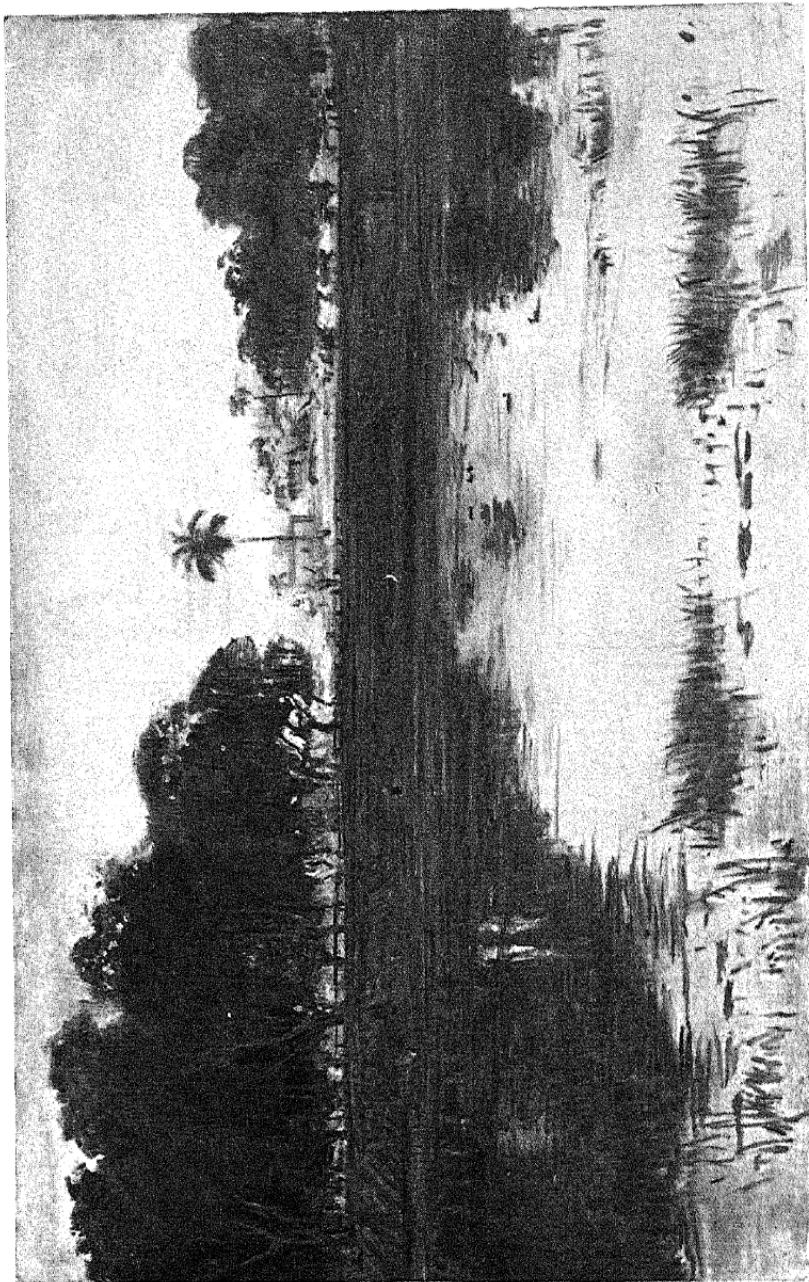
CHAPTER XVI

BANGALORE

THERE was a knocking and a calling “What ho—within there ! ” and I got up in the grey dawn and found my cousins outside our carriage, looking rather chilled. A native stationmaster had promised to wire to them for me, to tell them we would finish our eight hours sleep at the Bangalore siding. But here they were and had received no wire ! Therefore, put not your faith in native stationmasters.

Our hosts have a lovely bungalow, I use the adjective advisedly and in its fullest sense as applied to the beauties of domestic architecture and surroundings. The white Doric pillars that support the semi-circular verandah are tall and well-proportioned, and support a pleasantly pitched tile roof. The tiles are of many weather-worn tints ; above these are high trees with white stems and exquisitely delicate foliage, through which you see patches of blue sky. Down some of the pillars hang creepers, one is heavy with dark green leaves and deep orange flowers, another is covered with trumpet-shaped flowers of fleshy white ; and a tall tree close to the verandah is covered with creeper that forms a perfect cascade of dark green leaves and mauve flowers.

The appearance of the bungalow, the lightness of the sunny air, and our kind welcome made us feel anything but way-worn travellers. Still ; the above circumstances seemed uncommonly conducive to sleep on our first day at Bangalore.



What splendid rooms we have. Our bedrooms and dressing-rooms would make a chapel. And the style of construction is in charming taste—great simple spaces of distempered wall and matted floor and timbered ceiling, the structural features showing wherever they may be sightly, with breadth of spaces such as you see in Spanish houses ; the furnishings simple, everything necessary, and little besides, a pleasant sense of room for growth.

Bangalore as a city is not at all compactly built together. The compounds round bungalows are really parks, and the roads are so wide and long that it takes hours to call on the nearest neighbour. R. had been stationed here some time, but his wife is a new arrival, so we found her engaged in making a round of first calls—the newcomer calls on the residents in India—seventeen in one day was her record I believe—possibly a Bangalore record—it would have killed any man.

We drove round the tanks and pretty avenues and parks after lunch, and through the native town. It positively takes one's breath away with its crowds of picturesque scenes—pictures every yard in the mile! Fortunately for us our host and hostess are as fond as we are of looking at things and trying to remember them, and delight in showing us places they have remarked for their picturesque interest. Of one of these characteristic tanks I have made a jotting in colour. Soft foliaged trees along a road on the top of a green embankment were reflected in the calm water ; at its edge, on stone steps and amongst the reeds, little copper-coloured women in rich colours stooped and washed brightly coloured clothes. The surface of the water was speckled with wild duck, which splashed and swam about making silvery ripples break into the warm reflection, and a faint smoke from the village softened the whole effect. White draped figures passed to and fro on the bund under the trees, sometimes aglow with rays that shot between the tree trunks, or again silhouetted violet against golden light—

What splendid rooms we have. Our bedrooms and dressing-rooms would make a chapel. And the style of construction is in charming taste—great simple spaces of distempered wall and matted floor and timbered ceiling, the structural features showing wherever they may be sightly, with breadth of spaces such as you see in Spanish houses ; the furnishings simple, everything necessary, and little besides, a pleasant sense of room for growth.

Bangalore as a city is not at all compactly built together. The compounds round bungalows are really parks, and the roads are so wide and long that it takes hours to call on the nearest neighbour. R. had been stationed here some time, but his wife is a new arrival, so we found her engaged in making a round of first calls —the newcomer calls on the residents in India—seventeen in one day was her record I believe—possibly a Bangalore record—it would have killed any man.

We drove round the tanks and pretty avenues and parks after lunch, and through the native town. It positively takes one's breath away with its crowds of picturesque scenes—pictures every yard in the mile ! Fortunately for us our host and hostess are as fond as we are of looking at things and trying to remember them, and delight in showing us places they have remarked for their picturesque interest. Of one of these characteristic tanks I have made a jotting in colour. Soft foliaged trees along a road on the top of a green embankment were reflected in the calm water ; at its edge, on stone steps and amongst the reeds, little copper-coloured women in rich colours stooped and washed brightly coloured clothes. The surface of the water was speckled with wild duck, which splashed and swam about making silvery ripples break into the warm reflection, and a faint smoke from the village softened the whole effect. White draped figures passed to and fro on the bund under the trees, sometimes aglow with rays that shot between the tree trunks, or again silhouetted violet against golden light—

for “white is never white,” as the drawing-master has it.

We were a very happy party of four at dinner, with many pleasant subjects to discuss—the journey out, and our friends on the *Egypt*, and the various people “we knew to speak to ;” then we had to retail the most recent gossip from Dharwar, in which place R. was quartered for some years, and he told us old amusing stories about that station and its doings. Then there were questions of dress to be discussed by the Memsahibs, and we men had problems from home to solve—as to rearing of fish and game, and what we had done, and what we would like to do ! and besides, what was serious, we had plans for future movements to make. There are so many sights to see here, and in front of us, and so many, it appears, we ought to have stopped to see between Bombay and here ; however we realise that unless American born we can only assimilate what an American would consider to be a very little in a very long time, so we are going along slowly. We should properly go to see the Cauvery Falls,¹ the water of which drives the dynamos there for the Kolar gold fields, sending the current that equals 11,000 horse power ninety-three miles by wire to Kolar, and fifty-seven to this place, to light the streets. Four hundred feet the water falls, in pipes, and drives the turbines ; so in this, the dry season, there is little water to be seen. I can almost fancy I see this, and I may read about the engineering at home !

The Falls of Gairsoppa, it is decided in our evening confab, we must see, and we smoke various cheroots over them. So far we go in train, I understand, towards the coast and the wild west, then we get into tongas and creep down and under jungle day after day, an immensity of trees towering above till the wholesome light of the sky is shut out and you breathe in the damp depths of

¹ See graphic description *Cauvery Falls Power Station, Kolar Gold Fields*, in “*Vision of India* :” by Sidney Low (Smith, Elder & Co.).

the primeval jungle, and see huge mosquitoes and diminutive aboriginal men with bows and arrows hiding from you like the beasts in the field that perish. So you travel day in day out, spending nights in Dak bungalows with nothing to eat but tins. I said, "It seems a damned long, dark, boggy, dangerous road," and D. was shocked, till I reminded her I was only quoting Tony Lumpkin. The explanation being doubtfully accepted, D. expatiated on the delight of coming out of the gloom to find all the stir and movement and light in the great opening where there was 829 feet of water tumbling into a cauldron full twenty fathoms deep, blue sky overhead, foam everywhere, rainbows, and more falls below, and glittering wet rocks and waving foliage all round. A hard place to fish, I thought. And believe I will just fancy I see this place too ; it sounds rather a "circumbendibus" for us this journey."

And why leave Bangalore at all ? Why fatigue ourselves seeing more places and sights than these we have near us ? We feel inclined to pitch our tents here for a prolonged stay, the light is so brilliant and air sunny and refreshing, and there are subjects for pictures on all sides of all kinds ; of village life, people, beasts and foliage —such exquisite Corot foliage—and reflections in reedy pools.

As I write, within a stone throw of my dressing-room, there appears a queenly figure, draped in crimson edged with gold, from the shadows of the trees. She stands in full sun, beside grey boulders under green foliage ; cattle finely bred, like deer, feed on either side of her, and the sapling stems draw shadows on their fawn and white hides, and across the withered, short, dry grass. She belongs to R.'s establishment, I suppose—wife of a Sweeper perhaps, but at this distance she might be a Grecian goddess for she is too far off to distinguish features. The golden brown of her face and the blue-black of the hair under the crimson and gold in full afternoon sun are splendid against

the depths of green shadow. Her contemplative attitude suggests at once repose and calm expectancy.

This afternoon I made another jotting of a woman herding a cow in a dell at the side of the road shaded from the rays of the afternoon sun. Her dress was metallic-blue, in folds as severely classical as those of a Muse of Hercu-



laneum, and it was edged with lines of pale gold. On her brown arms were silver bangles, and a band of dull rose round the short sleeves of the bodice. She led a white cow and its calf, and they browsed on the leaves of oleander; the pink geranium coloured flowers and grey-green leaves harmonised with the white skins of her beasts.

The black touch in the picture was her smooth black hair and painted eyebrows.

Here follows a pen scribble in my journal of what happens in this household once a week I understand. Before dinner mine host and hostess give some signal and the servants line up on the verandah and their wages are paid. Such a lot of ground is covered and so very quickly. R. knows apparently all about each servant, how many children this man has, and whether they are married or single, and what he owes the money-lender, what part of the country he comes from, etc., etc. Mrs B. checks off everything paid out. So from bridge making and railway contracts in the early morning to annas and pice for servants in the evening has been R.'s day's work ; half-an-hour at this minor business and we are free for dinner, host and hostess, at any rate, conscious of a day's work done.



We were enjoying our cheroots to-night in the warm dusk in the verandah, when there was a shout that there was a thief in the house—we jumped ! R. into one entrance, I into another, and we scurried round the big, dark drawing-room trying to catch him ; someone passed me and I “held him low”—it was R. and I felt small ! The thief had got out between us, and had jumped a pretty high balcony, and we followed with a View Haloo or something to that effect in Tamil from R. I never saw the thief, but R. said he dis-

appeared under a road bridge which led to a donga and jungle and native huts. He dodged a neighbour's butler who was brought out by the shouts, and got away. He had only just got into the house, for there were only some small silver things taken. It was like a scene from a comic opera when we got back, as our host and hostess with old fashioned lamps went along their line of white-robed servants. These were all dying to speak at once, but had each to wait his turn and give his account of how the thief had come in, how he was seen, and what he was doing when the alarm was given.

With this veracious account of an inglorious adventure I will draw another day's journal to its close, and if the reader is not asleep, we will now proceed to consider the subject of snipe shooting.

CHAPTER XVII



EMBER . . . —We left "Locksley Hall" at 7.30, and D. came to station to see us off and to give last instructions to the servants about catering for us. We have to train all night till two in the morning, then shoot duck and snipe at an out of the way tank, get back to train at twelve, and then home after another day and night in train. A long journey for a small shoot, but for R. the shoot is only a minor consideration. All

along the road he stops at stations and gets reports from contractors and workers on the line, and generally sees that the line is in working order. His assistant engineer comes with his own carriage. R., as senior, can take the tail of train with our carriage so that he can watch the track as we jog along. It's a nice slow train, and you think you could walk beside it up the hills, but in reality you have to go at a gentle trot.

Bangalore Station was a sight for a tenderfoot—brim full of colour and types. Half in shadow half in light, as if several theatrical companies were on tour in their costumes—a company, say of The Merchant of Venice, another of The Cingalee, and a Variety Show or two. There

were sellers of green bananas and soda water and native sweet cakes in all the colours you can think of, and British soldiers in khaki and pith helmets, and everyone running about with properties and luggage on their heads and in their hands.

This is, to my mind, a luxurious way of travelling. Both carriages have berths, bathroom, and kitchen, all very diminutive except the berths. Our kitchen would hardly hold one European, but holds at least three natives. At five and a half miles an hour you can do all sorts of things, paint or snooze, or, as I prefer to do on this day, sit in a comfortable arm-chair with feet in the sun on the after platform and watch the line running away behind into the vanishing point.

R.'s assistant, H., is in our carriage, and these two pull out all sorts of documents and papers flooded with figures and go into their work, and talk of cement, sleepers, measurements, curve stresses and strains generally, and of the particular bits of business on hand; but occasionally they have a minute or two off and we find ourselves talking of duck and snipe and overhauling decoys, R. and H. discussing the chances of the season at this tank or the other. Then they get to business again, about a native contractor perhaps—is he all right, or is he not?—and every now and then we disembark and have a brief chat with a stationmaster, and look at points or trees and buildings; these matters are gone through pretty quickly, and we get on to the tail of our train again as it slowly moves off.

We are going now through a gravelly red soil, the sun blazing hot. We go so comfortably slowly that we can lean out and see our little narrow gauge train crawling along like a silver grey caterpillar, for the passenger cars and goods cars are round topped like Saratoga trunks, and their French grey colour harmonises with the hedge of grey-green cactus leaves on the side of the line. Beyond the train we see the lines like curves of blue riband on the yellow and white quartz ballast of the track. Our

little engine puffs up little rags of white against the blue sky. Add a touch of bright colour, a flutter of pink drapery, and a brown shoulder, a finely modelled arm and bangle at a carriage window, catching the cool draught, and you have, I think, quite a pleasant colour scheme. The track is so tidy that there are white quartz stones arranged along each side of the yellow quartz ballast, and where there is sand ballast it is patted down as neatly as a pie crust. R. says it is difficult to prevent the native navvy making geometric designs with the coloured quartz.

By the afternoon we are in a wide-spreading country, only broken with clumps of palms at great distances. The soil is dull red, almost magenta at the edge of cuttings,



and above on the plains it is yellow ochre with scrub bushes and many lemon-yellow blossoms. As the sun sets we pass flocks of sheep and goats collecting for protection within tall zerebas of thorn and palm leaves. The dust they raise catches the sun and hangs over them in a golden mist. Far out on the horizon there is one streak of warm violet where some low hills appear—a simple enough landscape, with not many features, but with the charm that belongs to scenes at sea or in the desert, where there are but two elements to hold the thoughts.

Now we draw up near a village, and women and

children watch our train. I wish they'd keep some one portion of their limbs and draperies still an instant to let me see and draw, but they won't. Two women lean against the wire fence near us, one a tall, small-headed and long-limbed matron in dullish green sari with gold or yellow round its edges in thin and broad lines, and a bodice of orange and crimson. Her neighbour leans and talks, incessantly moving ; she is wrapped in vivid crimson, edged with a broad band of poppy blue. Behind them the village is hazy in half tone against the light ; across the space between, there flits a fairy in lemon-yellow or orange drapery slightly blown out so that the sun makes it a transparent blaze of yellow—a dainty Tanagra Figurine come to life and colour again !

. . . ARSIKERE.—We have our carriage gently shunted at a siding here, and stop under a banyan tree, and have our meal in the moonlight—such moonlight and such a meal ! I've heard so much of Indian cooking, of the everlasting chicken and curries, but out of our two tiny kitchens we get a dinner worthy of a moderately good French café, fish and beef, and game, and variety of vegetables.—Indian beef is not half bad in my humble opinion, and the Vino Tinto is straight from Lisbon, by Goa, the Portuguese port on this west coast, what better could a man desire ?

A hitch in our arrangements occurred here. Our plans were to tie on to a north-going train at two in the morning, and cut off again at a tank some miles up the line where the duck-shooting is sublime. But my host got a wire from the head engineer of the whole line about matters connected with the royal visit to Mysore, and he must now go down south, to stamp on the bridges and see that the line is all firm and safe, so the wanderer from home again realises that there is a Prince in the land ! And we feel loyally resigned, especially as there happens to be good snipe ground where we are, and we can't return before midday to-morrow, and so can have a

long half-day's shooting before we hitch on to the south mail train.



As we sit at table on the side of the track, the village dogs steal into the moonlight and come gradually nearer us; masterless dogs of any colour betwixt the collie and fox-terrier. No one feeds them or owns them, so there's plenty of appetite and unclaimed affection going. One old lady takes her position beside us for the night, and its poor bony sides are filled for once, and its brown eyes in the morning look grateful and eager for more. R. says he thinks the most miserable are those with fox-terrier blood; and they do not outlive their second litters. It lay on the sand a little way off the greater part of the night, the shyer dogs still farther off, scarcely seen in the darkness. Perhaps these half-breds have inherited thoughts of former better days, which brings me back to that freckled, sandy-haired Eurasian boy at the Bundar, with his black eyelashes, and the blue-eyed, curly-haired girl in the native throng.



Now we are coming to the snipe, "little by little," our nurse used to say, "as the lawyers get to Heaven," and I put in notes about them here from a letter written to my friend W. B., but not yet posted.

"MY DEAR W. B.,—You ask me about sport, and if I've got near a tiger? So far as I am aware I have not been in the immediate proximity of a tiger, though I have been in what is, at times, a tiger country—about Dharwar, and where I'd very probably have got one if I'd taken many men and months and much money to secure it. But to-day I've had funnier shooting than I've ever had



—fancy snipe, my dear man, amongst palm trees! tall cocoa-nut palms, betel nuts, and toddy palms, and banana trees—big, snipe, and decently tame. Fancy them dodging like woodcock at home, from a blaze of sun into the deep shadows of subtropical palm groves!

"We trolleyed to our shooting ground, R. and I and four trolley men—such a nice way of getting along—with palms on either side of the track, some of them covered with creepers from their very tops to the ground in

cascades—Niagaras, I mean, of green leaves and lilac blossoms ; and through this jungle the sun streamed across the yellow quartz track and glittered on the lines. Two men at a time ran barefooted behind, one on each rail, and shoved the trolley and jumped on going down hill. We went at just a nice rate, which gave us time to note the birds and flowers along the side of the line.

“ About two miles down the line we struck off to the east on foot, and crossed rice stubbles with clear rills of water running through them, the first clear water we have seen here so far—any we have seen has been red or yellow with mud. Then we came to woods of all sorts of palms, mostly low growing on white sand, and here and there pools and marshes over which the palms stood and were reflected and threw sharp shadows across the blue reflection from the sky. Fancy shooting common snipe in such a botanical garden ! The last I shot were with S. in Ayrshire in cold, and wind and wet and a grey light on high moorland, about the 1st of last October.



“ We spread out, R. and I and his merry men, and waded ; his butler and cook apparently as keen about shikar as cooking, and promptly three snipe got up, jolly slow flyers, in front of me, and I let off and hit one of the palm tree trunks and the snipe disappeared in the

"I wish very much both R. and I could spare a little more time for this pastime, "but one canna dae a' thing," as they say at St. Abbs, and R. has to attend to Royal preparations south—thus has the honour and glory of serving his country and his King—I am trying to see where my Ego scores, but don't—I miss a half-day's shooting. But the little we had, was astonishingly interesting though it wasn't very long. Now we have a day and a night home again—a hundred miles to a snipe shoot, my longest journey in proportion to the size of the shoot; but no distance at all compared with its novelty and interest. . . . Drew most of the way home, cows, aloes, trees, women's figures, men's ditto, dogs, goats, palms, etc., etc. It passes the time and does no harm that I wot of.

All pleasures but the Artist's bring
"I' th' tail repentance like a sting."

"Home to Bangalore and the rehearsal of our adventures to our better halves, and talk—well into the night, which means here about 11.30! Then to bed at once, for R. has to start early with his Chief in the morning, he is coming from the Central Office at Dharwar; to test bridges and things in Mysore, to see they are strong enough, for they say there are twenty English valets coming in the Royal train!"

It rained heavily all night, and this morning the sky was overcast, and already we, who have been in India only a few weeks, feel almost vexed that it is not sunny. In the morning we went to the Residency to call—a strange hour to call at, one of the things in India nobody can understand—as reasonable as top hats and frock coats in Calcutta. It is a very fine Embassy indeed—palace, perhaps, you might almost call it, with a nice air of official dignity that comes from the Lion and the Unicorn in the front of the house above the entrance, and the little khaki clad native soldiers, mounted orderlies, and Red Chuprassis in groups about the grounds.

Mrs Fraser, wife of the Resident, was at home, and wore a very pretty dress of soft grey and black muslin(?)

with touches of dull rose bows—but how can you describe a dress of the present period, they are such subtle things; a Romney or a Reynolds dress would be easy enough—something white hitched up here or there would be near enough, but nowadays the colours of various materials tell through each other so delicately and the shapes suggest faintly so many periods that I question if it is in the power of words to describe a modern frock.

Our hostess, I gathered, is deeply engrossed in making the bundabast¹ for the entertainment of the Prince and his retainers—If twenty valets require so many napkins, for so many days, how many cups and saucers will be needed for a Royal Procession for a week, and so on?

15th. Dec.—This ought to be a date to remember in our lives. My neice and I went to jail to-day, both for the first time, and I am not anxious to go again. It is immediately across the road from Locksley Hall. We passed through a double archway, guarded inside by native soldiers. Facing us as we entered, the walls were decorated with trophies of chains and fetters, which the man in the street might see as he passed.

The Governor very kindly went round with us, and we saw a distinctly stronger type of man than those outside; here and there a trifle too much cheek bone and queer eyes, mostly murderers, many with faces one would pick for choice as manly men. Famine times account for some of the murders, and overstocking I should say; it's done everywhere, in trout ponds, deer forests, and sheep runs. India, I expect, is over preserved; a bad season comes, and famine, and one starving fellow chips in with another, and knocks a third party on the head because he has a meal on him, and the first parties' children are crying for food—and by the prophets, we'd

I think the context explains the meaning of Bundabast—an invaluable word. I take it, it is used correctly as above. You can make "bundabast" for a campaign, I believe, or for a picnic; *i.e.*, order the carriages, food, and things, and the right people, and generally take all responsibilities therefor.

each try to do the same under similar circumstances, and the result would be the survival of the fittest. Government now catches the would-be "fittest" and sets him hanging to a piece of rope, or makes him wear beautiful bright chains and weave beautiful carpets, as they do here, in all the colours of Joseph's coat, in silk or cotton; with everything he wants except liberty and the sun on the road outside—and the children and wife. The carpets are exquisitely made in hand-looms. The men sit in a sort of rifle pit and weave on an upright hand-loom, and the patterns on great carpets or the finest of silk rugs grow out of their wicked brains only; there's no pattern in front of them to copy from; they do it by heart. You know a "Lifer" from a "Timer" by the colour of their skull caps; one is white, the other brown—I think the brown is the "Lifer." All is beautifully kept, and the men look at you when ordered to do so, also when they are not ordered and your back is turned. They give their names too when ordered, and crimes, and terms of imprisonment, so gently. Oh! how I'd love to kick the blessed wall all down and let the lot out! then I'd have to sit up all night, I suppose, with a gun, looking after our silver-plated spoons,

The principal individual who caused most trouble in the prison was a "Lifer," I think, a most remarkably long, thin man, actually eel-like. He had escaped three times. The last hole he escaped by he made with a nail, and it had just been bricked up and plastered over. He was not allowed to work, merely stood bolt upright, a head and shoulder higher than his two, armed jailers, who were chained to him. He was motionless as a statue, but I never saw such unrest as there was in his eyes; there was the look of the eye of a bird in the hand, one simple concentrated expression of watchfulness for a chance to escape. He is a bit of a wag, I am told. Once when he escaped he borrowed a carriage and livery and engaged himself to the services of a lady in Bangalore, and actually

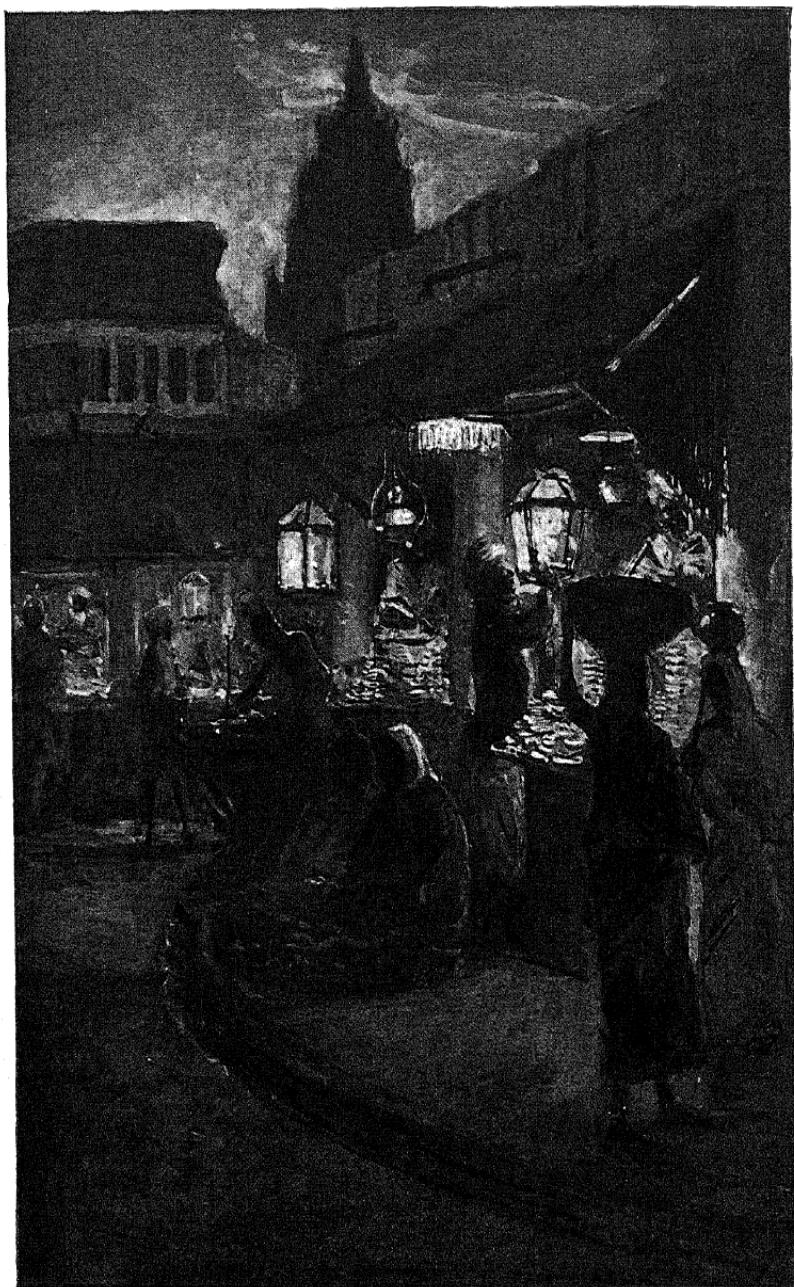
drove the lady to prison to call on the Governor. But when he gathered the Governor was coming to return the call, he thought it time to go ; I don't know how he was captured again, and I wonder very much if he will escape once more. His four companions who stood beside him in the blaze of joyous sun were just going to be released in half an hour from all their joys and troubles. Two of them looked very murderous specimens, two looked good, I don't know why, but one felt curiously shy about looking at them. One or two of the murderers faces wore a quiet half-smiling expression, barely human, and that seemed to me to spell "killing" quite distinctly and without any evil intent, like the expression on a Greek head I have only once seen, a youthful combatant—a cheery unintropective look, a tough round neck, raised chin, oblique eyes, and the least smile on lips just parted. One young woman had that kind of face too ; the rest were just as good in expression as outsiders. They were employed grinding millets in hand quirns, hard work, I'd think ; the top stone they turn round, weighs two stone and they put it round fairly quickly. I'd so much have liked to have drawn this particular woman's face. I think it is the only handsomely shaped face I've seen in India so far, and yet that queer inhuman look ought to have prevented a child closing its eyes near her. She had killed a child for its bangle and dropped it into a well, and in prison nearly killed another for another bangle. She was fourteen and had a look of complete ignorance of good or evil. This good-looking girl they tell me is to go into a nunnery —by my Hostie ! I'd like to hear the end of the story.

We came back from the jail and found a tableau arranged on our verandah. It was well done, whether by accident or design. The two principal actors sat in the middle of the verandah with neat bundles arranged round them, and behind them sat their two slaves or henchmen in garments of complimentary tints. The Memsaibs came and were salaamed, and sat in front of the traders. Then

the bundles were opened and blossomed into colours and fabrics. Within ten minutes the verandah was covered with silks of every hue, gorgeous colours and the delicate colours of moonlight, so that the matting was completely covered with a veritable riot of colours and textures—a much more wonderful effect than any tricks with baskets or mangoes grown under sheets. I tried to put this down in colour, and here is a pen and ink jotting of the subject.



Sunday.—Walked round the outside of the prison grounds amongst little patches of highly-cultivated market gardens and clumps of palms, and these long pumps like the ancient catapult with bronze men sweating at them pulling down the long arm of the balanced yard to let the bucket down the well, then tipping the water out into gutters of mud to irrigate. They do it pretty much the same way up the Nile. The cottages have low mud walls, and are thatched with dried palm leaves and scraps of corrugated iron, and the naked children, with their coal-black mops of hair, play about in the dust with the hens, and seem to have a good time. They are chubby and jolly, and don't quarrel so much, or speak so harshly as school board children in our Bonnie Lowlands. Here and there are quaint little temples, stone built, under



the palms between the patches of cultivated ground. There are prickly pears, and hedges of different thorny creepers with flowers of pink, cinnamon, deep orange, and violet. I pass a group of goats feeding on one of these hedges, black, white, and brown—a pleasant motley of moving colour. The piece of hedge near me has pink flowers, and behind it you see a little lapis-lazuli sky. The black goat's coat is almost blue with reflected sky. Near me a boy stands in the shadow of a tree herding a cow. The leaves throw deep shadows on the rusty red path and a tracery of leaf shadows, on the cow's back and sides—deeper in colour than the velvety black of the hide itself.



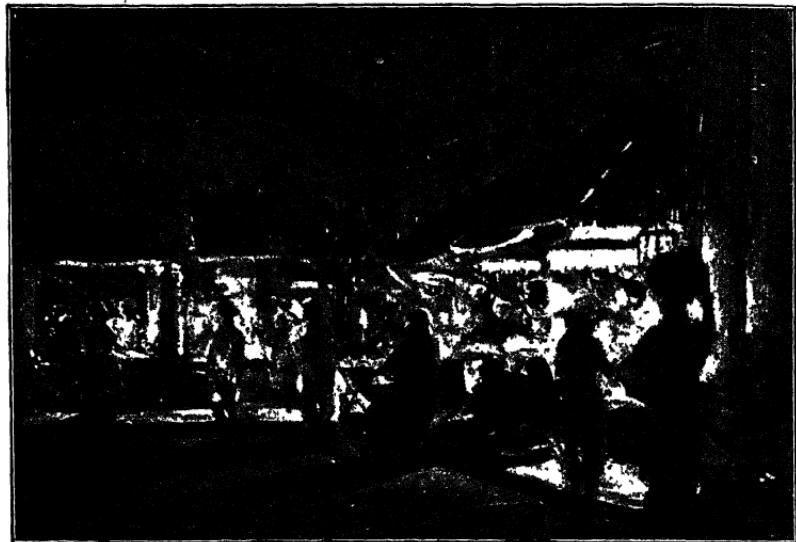
In the evening my hostess drives me to another part of the bazaar, and we scribble, and try hard to remember a street corner and prevent other scenes obliterating our impressions and come straight home to get it down

The lamplight conflict with daylight is to me as interesting here as at home. The best minutes in the day, I think, for colour, are when the shadows from figures passing the lamps just become visible, when they still hold the blue of day in them, and so contrast pleasantly with the yellow lights of oil and electric lamps.

Outside many of the booths chandeliers of cut crystal are hung, and give, what I consider, a charming effect.

In the evening there was a dinner party at the Residency, to which Mrs Fraser very kindly invited us, and there was pleasant talk about Burmah and princely pageants, elephant kedar camps, and the right royal entertainments to be held at Mysore; and of how the twenty valets and the hundreds of guests are to be provided for;

to quote the Tales of the Highlands, “there will be music in the place of hearing, meat in the place of eating, smooth drinks and rough drinks, and drinks for the laying down of slumber, mirth raised and lament laid down, and a right joyful hearty plying of the feast and Royal



Company”—but how it is all to be done is past my comprehension! Noah, the Raven said, did them really well in the Ark; but a Royal Retinue must be much more difficult to provide for, must need a bigger “bundabust”—I believe I’ve used this word rightly again!

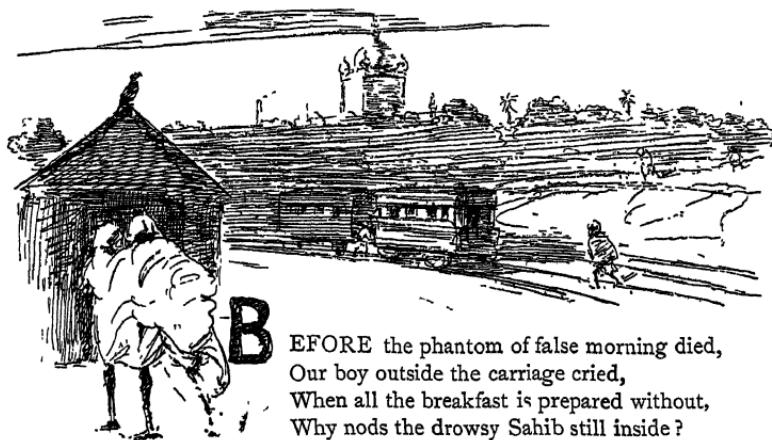
The Maharajah of Mysore came after dinner. He was dressed in a pale turquoise silk coat, with dark blue and white and gold turban with diamond aigrette, and white trousers, patent leather shoes, and a long necklace of very large diamonds. He is twenty-one and good-looking, with pleasant expression and a quiet possessed manner. I am almost glad I did not know that he is building such a wonderful palace, or I would have felt oppressed. This palace at Mysore is to be the finest in the world, so people here say, but of it anon. We spoke

of music ; he plays a great number of instruments (I think thirteen). I asked which music he liked best, Eastern or Western, and he replied, " When I hear Western music, I think surely nothing could be better. Then when I hear our own Eastern music, again I think nothing could be better." He understands the various kinds of our Highland music, and argued that if you understand the folk music of one race you can understand that of others. To me it seems a loss to music



that these early forms of various races are not more often studied by modern musicians. Writers and painters set an example in this way ; painters and sculptors especially, for they study the art of all times and peoples, ancient Greek, Egyptian, Japanese, etc., but what does the ordinary musician know of these ancient Greek, Egyptian, or Celtic tunes that are fast being forgotten, or of Japanese, Indian, or Burmese intricacies ? Sir Arthur Sullivan did study Burmese music, but was not that quite exceptional ? Writers too, generally have a smattering of some dead languages, and even advocate the study to-day, of Sanskrit, and Gaelic.

CHAPTER XVIII



B

EFOR the phantom of false morning died,
Our boy outside the carriage cried,
When all the breakfast is prepared without,
Why nods the drowsy Sahib still inside?
and

Wake for the sun has scattered into flight
The stars before it from the field of night ;
Drives night along with it, and strikes
The Rajah's palace with a shaft of light—

as above, but possibly it is just a Government building, a post office, perhaps ! Our two carriages are in a siding at this Mysore station, and the servants are outside with breakfast. The robes of the natives coming towards the station in the twilight under said shaft of light are greenish in contrast ; they are wrapped up in their white mantles to keep off what they appear to think dangerous morning air. Only a few of them are astir, and the dew runs steadily from the roof of our carriage and makes a hole in the sandy track, and an early crow is round for anything that may be going. The cook comes past with a comforting glow from charcoal in a frying pan, so we know our *chota*

hazri will be before us in no time, after which we intend to trolley back on the line to Seringapatam.

We came here yesterday afternoon from Bangalore, R. and D. with their carriage, and self and G. in one the Railway Co. let us have—for a consideration! A very good plan this—you pay for three fares and have your carriage overnight, so at places where there are no hotels you are more comfortable than if there were!

Coming here from Bangalore to Mysore, the line is interesting all the way, the scenes change constantly—I have very distinct recollections of at first “garden scenery,” then jungle and bushy woods running into rocky gorges, barren sand wastes and rich rolling corn lands alternating in the few hours run, yet in my journal I have not a line of pen or scrape of pencil of these scenes; I daresay the reader has noticed this, that scenes taken unconsciously on the tablets of memory—unconscious impressions—are more lasting than those taken down consciously and deliberately,

Mysore town is a place of wide roads and trees, fields intended to be parks some day, and light and air. Many houses of European origin, somewhat suggestive of Italian or Spanish villas, are shuttered and closed in, so as to give a sense of their being deserted. You drive past these silent houses and their gardens and come to the native town, which is anything but silent or deserted, and then to the new palace; the modern sight of southern India. It is brimming with life; it looks like a Gothic cathedral in course of construction. Two towers, each at a guess, 150 feet high, with a wing between them, bristle with bamboo scaffolding so warped and twisted out of the perpendicular that the uprights are like old fishing rods. The extraordinary intricacy is quite fascinating, but at present it partially prevents one seeing the general proportions and effect of the building. As we see it, in the afternoon, the great mass of building is grey against the western light; thousands of men, women, boys, and

children are scattered over its face on these fragile perches, and though not in sunlight, their many-coloured draperies reflect on the variously coloured stones at which they are carving. Around us, on the ground, are other thousands doing similar work, hewing, sawing, and carving marbles and granite—such intricate carving—in reddish and grey-green granite. As to the general architectural effect it would be unwise to venture an opinion at present; but the details are simply marvellous. I believe it is intended to be the finest palace in the world, and if a great many exquisite fancies put together, will form one great conception, then certainly this expression in architecture must be a magnificent work of art. The people to-day and the generations to come must owe this Prince great gratitude for the encouragement of so many skilled craftsmen, and for the preservation of Indian arts and crafts. There were four hundred fine-wood carvers, and four hundred fine-stone carvers, carving filigree ornaments, chains, and foliage of the most astonishing realism in these materials. Fancy, actual chains in granite, pendants from elephants' heads! Most of the skilled masons and joiners of India, I am told, have been collected here. The masons must be in thousands; they are wonderfully skilled in work at granite, their very lightness of hand seems to let them feel just the weight of iron needed to flake off the right amount from the granite blocks. A very much extended description of the Temple of Solomon might give to one who had time to read an idea of the richness of the materials employed, and the variety of the subjects of the decorations. There is marble-work and wood-work, silver doors, ivory doors, and rooms, halls, and passages of these materials, all carved with Indian minuteness and delicacy, with telling scenes from the stories of Hindoo deities; and in the middle of these Eastern marvels are alas! cast-iron pillars from Glasgow. They form a central group from base to top of the great tower; between them at each flat they are encircled with cast-iron perforated

balconies. They are made to imitate Hindoo pillars with all their taperings and swellings, and are painted vermillion and curry-colour. Opening on to these cast-iron balconies are the silver and ivory rooms and floors of exquisite marble inlay.

We saw inside on many floors, modellers with their clay, modelling groups for the stone-carvers, in high or low relief, with utmost rapidity, freedom, finish, and appreciation of light and shade. The different methods of craftsmen in different countries is always interesting. Here the modeller works on the floor seated on his heels ; he runs up acanthus leaves, geometric designs, or groups of figures and animals with a rapidity that would give our niggling Academy teachers at home considerable food for thought—and yet the work is fine, and the figures are full of expression. The area of a workman's studio you might cover with a napkin, or say, a small table-cloth. The carver takes the model and whacks it out in *granite* without any pointing or other help than his hand and eye and a pointed iron chisel and hammer, and he loses very little indeed of the character of the model, in fact, as little as some well paid Italian workers.

The wood-carving, as far as technical skill in cutting goes, was out and away beyond anything we could almost dream of at home, and all at 1s. 4d. a day, which is good pay here. One man cut with consummate skill geometrical ornaments on lintels to be supported by architraves covered with woodland scenes, with elephants foreshortened and ivory tusks looking out from amongst tree-trunks, and most naturalistic monkeys, peacocks, fruit, and foliage. All this we saw rapidly dug out in the hard brown teak with delightful vigour, spontaneity, and finish. One might fear that a geometrically carved lintel would not be quite in keeping with a florid jamb, but why carp, we should look at the best side of things. I think these same craftsmen working to the design of one artist, or artist and architect in one, might make a record. The

ability to carry out the design is here, and at such a price! But where is the thought, the conception for a Parthenon—a nation must first worship beauty before it can produce it.

I think the native town and streets here as good as can be for painting pictures; a man would have to come young and get up early to do the subjects you see in an hour or two. Here there is more style, wider surfaces, and character in the native houses than in Bombay.

We went to Seringapatam yesterday on trollies, nine miles back on the line by which we came from Bangalore to Mysore city. We had two trollies, R. and G. in front with workmen examining the line as we went, an extremely pleasant mode of procedure, with a certain dignity about it that is absent in a railway carriage.



We sit in front on comfortable seats, a red flag on a bamboo overhead, a fat station-master and two natives behind, and two on the rails to shove, the shadow of the whole show running along beside us outlined on the

ballast and sunny cactus hedge.

The first miles were over somewhat sandy, gravelly ground, then through groves of palms, and mostly down hill. At this comfortable rate we had time to look at the field workers in the rice crops, the palms with their skirts of creepers, and flowering thornbrakes, and the "bits" of the yellow corn and hedges and flat fields, that one might have seen on any summer's day in England. The reapers were in groups and lines in the greenish corn, the men bronze and bare to the waist-cloths, the women in many-coloured draperies, Ruths and reapers and Boazes by the dozen, with the women's

bangles gleaming, and the men's sickles glittering in the cheerful sunlight.

Seringapatam is on an island three miles long, in the Cauvery River; outside it we were met by a victoria and drove about the island. It is a pleasant place to spend a day; the marks of our forefathers' gunnery on the walls gives quite a homely feeling. You see where they camped and the river they looked at—a gentle-running, sapphire stream with yellow-grey stones showing across it, not much more than a hundred yards across when we saw it—and the big double masonry wall beyond it which they battered and scaled. Barring the trees and bushes that have grown on the walls, the battering looks as if it had only been done yesterday. We spent the morning going over the walls, without a guide or guide-book, trying to pick up the hang of the situation from what we had heard and read of the siege. There is pleasant park-land inside the walls, with beautiful tall trees, but the view that fascinates is from the walls across the river towards the points where the British guns were fired from, and from which the assault was made. Later in the day the stationmaster, Bubbaraya Moodeliar, gave us a copy of a guide he has written, such an excellent, concise description of the place and its history. It was pleasant to find so many of our countrymen's names on the first pages, and at the risk of being tedious, my friends, they are here; the names as they occur in this "Short History of the Siege and Assault," by an Indian native—Wellesley, Kelly, Sir David Baird, Captain Prescott, Lt. C. Dunlop, Baillie, Bell, Lt.-Colonel Gardiner, Dalrymple, General Stuart, Wallace, Sherbrooke, Douse, Hart, Lalor—all well-known Scottish and Irish names, except two or perhaps three that may be English, but the Native puts them all, down as "English!" So does the editor of Murray's "Guide to India"—describes those who fought under Duff, Grant, and Ford as an "English Force." So foolish writers are filching our good name by ignoring the Terms of Union,

and deliberately or unconsciously are working up another scrap on the banks of the Bannock—well, so be it, the times are a little dull ; and we need a little national stiffening north of Tweed.

The Water-gate, where Tippoo Sultan got his *coup de grace* in the general flight of his people, is just the quiet and peaceful place in which to doze and dream for a summer day on the green sward under the park-like trees. The Gate is an arched passage through thick walls leading to a walled-in space with trees hanging over it ; through a tumbled down bit of this wall you come on to the river. It was delightful there, no one about, excepting two or three women washing clothes on the stones in the clear running water, with the sunshine and flickering shadows from the trees falling over them. But it must have been bustling enough on the 4th of May, 1799, when Tippoo tried to pass, with Baird's troops behind ! What would one not give to have seen that last tableau : the British soldier in the crowd of natives going for the wounded Sultan's jewelled sword belt, the jam and press, and the heat and danger ! The Sultan objected and wounded the soldier, so the soldier put a bullet through the Sultan's head—and what became of our northern robber, and the belt ? What heaps of jewels Tippoo had collected ; he used to spend days in his treasure-house inventorying his stores of diamonds and pearls, and to-day you may see some of the strings of pearls if you dine out in Edinburgh. After the assault, during the night, a soldier found his way into the treasury, and by morning a handful of diamonds was the price offered and asked for a bottle of Arrack. These international looting scenes seem to me peculiarly fascinating ; I think a little prize-money won that way must feel worth fortunes earned in business. How our soldier of to-day swears at being deprived of such perquisites, and how he wishes he had been “ in the civil ” at Mandalay or Pekin.

We drove through the native town and bazaar. It seemed half empty ; a native villa there might be had for

one line of an old song. The Plague had been knocking at many doors a little while ago, and now they swing loosely on the hinges and the roofs are fallen in, or have been pulled down rather, by the sahibs, to let the sun in and the evil plague spirit out.

We came to the high mosque, Allah Musjid one of the most beautiful buildings I have ever seen ; its proportions are so big and simple. It was the favourite place of worship of Hyder Ali Khan and his son, Tippoo. You go up to it through porticoes, and up a rough white stair, with innumerable swallows in nests of feathers protruding from a level line of holes in, the hot, sun-lit wall just above your head on the right hand ; and past little rest rooms for worshippers on the left, of plain white-washed stone, and earth floors, all in shadow. Up the steps you come on a paved court with a balcony of white stone, and in front there is the moorish arcade of the mosque, and at either end a very high minaret, built possibly of stone white-washed, but much like weathered marble. The design is big and simple, finer in conception than anything we have seen so far. You have to lean your head very far back to follow up the minarets with your eyes to the top ; each is octagonal and tapers slightly to two balconies. Pigeon-holes follow the slightly sloping sides in a spiral direction, and under each hole there is a little carved ledge, and on these and hovering near are many pigeons. There is colour—marble-white, weathered to yellow, dazzling in the sun and cool violet in shade, blue rock pigeons everywhere, and at the very top of each spire a golden ball burns against the unfathomable blue.

The hot air is slightly scented with incense and sandalwood, and there is a musical droning from a few worshippers who repeat verses from the Koran in the cool white interior mingled with the cooing of innumerable pigeons, and the faint “kiree, kiree” of a kite a mile above, in the blue zenith.

We may not enter the mosque with boots on, and will not enter with them off, so we admire from the outside the half Indian, half Saracenic plaster-work in the interior of the arcade—the stalactite domes, diapers, groins, modellings *in situ*, and wish the authority on plaster work, Mr William Millar, was here to enjoy the skill and beauty of the work.

Next show—the summer palace of Tippoo Sultan. If you have been at Granada you can picture this as rather a thin Hindoo edition of Generalife Villa. It is moresque in style, but small in structural forms, smaller still in geometrical ornament, and without breadth or much harmony of colour schemes. Some small rooms were passable in gold and silver and primary colours, but the principal halls and galleries were extremely crude. To be seen properly there should be people in proportion, little Hindoo beauties sitting primly at the balconies that open on to the inner court, and playing beside the long formal tanks that extend far amongst shrubs and trees of the surrounding gardens. There are mural paintings on the verandah walls, which are spoken of as attractions and things to be seen ; they are slightly funny. They represent the defeat of our troops by Hyder Ali and the French, but they are of no great count, except as records of costume. But enough about this place : our interest lay in the battered walls and the cells behind them where our Highland and Lowland soldiers were imprisoned so long.

We passed the Water-gate on our way back, then under a grove of cocoa-nut palms, with many cocoa-nuts and monkeys in their tops ; and we threw stones up, but never a cocoa-nut did the monkeys throw back at us ! So we bought some at a price, a very small price indeed, and I for one enjoyed seeing them in their green fresh state ; when we got home to our railway carriages, that had come on for us from Mysore to Seringapatam, we had their tops slashed off with an axe : then put a long tumbler, mouth down over the hole and upset the two, and so got

the tumbler filled with the water from the inside and drank it. We'd have drunk anything we were so thirsty: so I will not offer an opinion as to its quality, more than that it was distinctly refreshing. The shells and husks were then split open, and we scraped the creamy white off the inside of the soft shell with a piece of the rough green husk and ate it and made believe it was delicious!

As the sun is setting we cross the Cauvery River again, leaving Seringapatam because it is said to be so malarial that it is unwise to spend the night there. . . . The river is golden, the rocks violet, and the sky above purple and vermillion; herons' scraik and duck are on the move, almost invisible against the dark palms and bushes and shadowy banks—I am not superstitious, but I think there were ghosts about, sturdy fellows in old-fashioned uniforms; I should like to have held converse with them.



mysore.—We got back to Mysore after dark.

Our two homes are gently shoved into a siding, and before you can say knife, our servants are spreading the table beside the carriage on the sand by lamplight; there are flowers on the table, silver, linen, and brass fingerbowls for four—the dinner prepared between Seringapatam and here *en route*! R. having made final arrangements with his people for a long hot day's work to-morrow, we fall to; needless to say we do not get into regulation evening kit, but the regulation warm bath before dinner was there all in order, even in such limited space!

We left all windows open on the road here, so to-night hope we have got rid of all the malarial infecting mosquitoes of Seringapatam — those here are bad enough.



. . . Work done, one sketch as above—catalogue misleader, "Dinner on the Line;" or would a "Meal on the Track" be

less descriptive?—Mind stuffed with those “erroneous, hazy, distorted first impressions,” which, according to, and with the approval of Mr Aberich Mackay, the “Anglo-Indian” hastens to throw away; and which I, not being in the least Angloanything, wish most sincerely I could keep!

CHAPTER XIX

TO ARTISTS



HANNAPATNA.—This is the third station south of Bangalore. It is just the place for an artist to come to to paint, and a mere step from B o m b a y. There's a Dak bungalow where he could put up, a charming place in a compound, with a servant in attendance. He'd just have to pack his sticks, take a second or third-class ticket on say the Massagerie—for an artist to be honest must be frugal

—pick up a *Boy* in Bombay at twenty to thirty rupees a month, and once out here there's little to spend money on but the bare cost of living.

Almost no one comes this way to stop, so he could probably have the bungalow almost as long as he liked, personally I'd have a tent so as to be absolutely independent. Then for subjects, there's a wealth within arm's reach; village bazaar pictures every ten yards, and round about cattle and ruins, temples, moresque and Hindoo, palms and jungle trees, graceful figures of women and men.

Not particularly nice people, I should say, but certainly picturesque and polite, with some lovely children. The little ones are nude, prettily shaped and brown and dusty as the bloom on fruit, and with such black eyes and wavy hair, the blackest black, with a polish, and very long eyelashes over dark eyes. Their faces seem refined and well shaped till they laugh or shout, when the lizard throat and regular monkey teeth show a little.

From daybreak, after *chota hazri*, the brother-of-the-brush would paint till eleven, then have breakfast proper, a read and loaf—possibly a little closing of the eyes to sleep would be more profitable—and paint again in the afternoon and evening. And if he didn't use all his stock of paints, water-colour, and oils before he left I'd be surprised. A great attraction would be the absence of distractions such as you'd have in larger centres, and very important, is the pleasant air here.

Arsikerry, a little further north the line, is better in this last respect, but I was not through the bazaar there, merely saw the place was fairly good for snipe, as previously remarked in these notes.

We put in here—Channapatna—yesterday afternoon. The sun was glowing on the rain-trees that shelter the station, and we selected a spot shaded by their foliage on a siding midst “beechen green and shadows numberless.” In a minute the servants were out on the sand track blowing up the fire for tea, which R. had well-earned, as he'd been trolleying since daybreak looking at bridges, viaducts, station-buildings, and the line, generally and practically, down to the stationmasters' gardens. Tiring work both for eyes and mind, for whilst trolleying you are quite unsheltered, so the heat in the cuttings, and the glare from the quartz and lines, has to be felt and seen to be believed, and of course the track is the thing that has to be constantly regarded, so blue spectacles are absolutely necessary, but only a partial protection to the eyesight. No wonder R. takes such care to plant

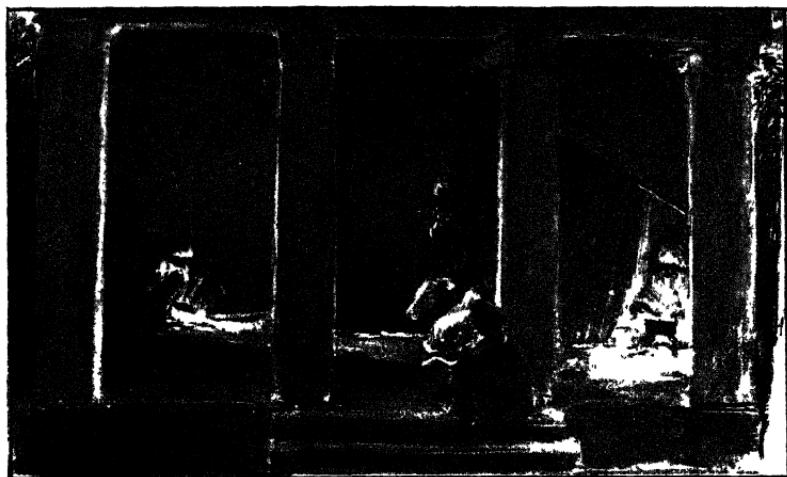
trees round stations and to encourage the stationmasters to grow flowers ! Apropos, there were once prizes given to stationmasters with the best gardens. Water being a consideration, the prize was allotted to the best garden in *inverse ratio* to its distance from a water supply. The stationmaster who got first prize was five miles from a supply, and his exhibit was one, almost dead flower, in a pot of dried earth ; so that "system" was shelved.

We walked round the village after tea and came to the above conclusions, that may possibly be useful to some brother artist. About the passage out, just one word more ; I met a colonel here who had tried third-class home on a Massagerie boat, and said it wasn't half bad ! He was fortunate in finding an uncrowded cabin.

Outside the little town were charming country scenes, and the village streets, busy on either side with all sorts of trades, were positively fascinating. In Bombay you have all the trades of one kind together, the brass-workers in one street, and another trade occupies the whole of the next street, and the houses are tall. Here are all sorts of trades side by side, and two-storied and one-storied houses, with the palms leaning over them. We bought for a penny or two an armful of curious grey-black pottery with a silver sheen on its coarse surface. The designs were classic and familiar ; the cruisie, for instance, I saw in use the other day in Kintyre, shining on a string of fresh herring, and you see it in museums amongst Greek and Assyrian remains. At one booth were people engaged making garlands of flowers, petals of roses, and marigolds sewn together, and heavy with added perfume ; at the next were a hundred and one kinds of grain in tiny bowls, and at a third vegetables, beans, and fruit.

As we come back to our carriages we pass a rest house or temple, I don't know which, perhaps both ; steps lead up to it, and it is made of square hewn-stone, all dull-white against an orange sky. It forms as it were a triptych. As we pass we look into its shadowy porch ; in the

middle panel are two oxen, one black the other white, lying down, and a man standing beyond them, just distinguishable by a little fire-light that comes from the left panel. In it, there is a man sitting with his arms over his knees fanning a little fire. In the right panel another native sits on his heels cooking a meal; a bamboo slopes across the cell behind him, and supports a poor ragged cloth, a purda, I suppose, and behind, are just discernible



his wife and child. These wayfarers make me at once think of a new and original treatment for a holy family, but hold! These passages of light and colour, form fading into nothingness, are they not worth understanding alone, are they not more pure art without being nailed to some tale from the past?

Our table looked very pretty in the evening, with our lamp lighting up my companions' faces, and the branches of the trees above us, with warm brown against the night blue sky.

. . . Now we are off again to Bangalore, loath to leave our leafy siding and the gentle faces at Channapatna, but R. has to be about business in the south again, so we go

back planning our next move, and we think we will decide on Madras ! We have been a long way and a long time from the sea, and would like to get a glimpse of it again ; the thought of it is refreshing, even though it is but a tepid eastern sea which we will have to cross if we decide on going to Burmah or the Straits.

BANGALORE, 20th December.—Back to "Locksley Hall" and big rooms, chairs, verandahs, everything feeling spacious and ample after our quarters in the train. The three days on the line feels like weeks, so much and so constantly have we been looking at interesting figures and scenes.

To-night, when cheroots were going, we talked of railway matters, big things and little things. A little thing was a dispute amongst natives on the line, settled satisfactorily the other day. Persons involved ; gatekeepers, police, native carters and witnesses galore. The gatekeeper, long resident in a hut of railway sleepers roofed with red soil, surrounded by aloes, heated by the sun, and watered by nothing. Behold his portrait in day dress ; at night he envelopes his noble form in ample, even voluminous draperies.

One night, he said, two carters lifted his level-crossing gates and took them away. Mysore State police investigate.—Report to R. ; no witnesses could be got to bear out gatekeeper's statement, and suggest gatekeeper had been demanding toll, *i.e.* blackmail, to put into his own pocket !

R. asks G.-K. !—"Why didn't you stop them taking the gates ?" G.-K. replies, "We did !"

R.—"Who was 'we' ?"

G.-K.—"Me and my friends and my cousins and my aunts ; certainly we stopped them—and we drubbed them too, and took them to the police station !"

British justice makes further inquiry—finds possibly



sixty rupees were expended somewhere, to produce the "No witnesses." Action taken—gatekeeper removed to more important trust—honesty established.

From strength of girders, cement *v.* lime, foundations of piers and curves of lines, we come to ghosts at night! These too, the engineer has to consider in his day's work. Only yesterday a ghost was reported on the line! And R. told me he came down the line in a trolley in the grey of morning lately, he vouched for this, and found on the line a patroller's lamp and no one holding it, then a turban, then top cloth, then a waist cloth, and finally the owner at station, collapsed, palpitating. R. asked him what he had seen. "It was a ghost" came after him. "What was it like," said R. ; "had it arms ?" "No ;" "Legs ?" "No." "How did it get along ?" He couldn't tell. It was *a shape* came after him. So these ghosts are positive facts here to be dealt with by superintendents and workman between them.

R.—Spoke as follows :—

"Now, my man, what I have to tell you about ghosts is this—you must remember, it is very important. These ghosts you see here that frighten you and your friends, as they have frightened you this morning, cannot so much as touch you, or even be seen by you at all *if you walk between the railway lines!* The iron on each side of you prevents their having the least influence over you ; I will not say this about tigers or bears, but ghosts—on the word of the Sahib, they cannot touch you between the rails !" So they go away and believe in the Sahib's magic, just as they believe his magic turns out the cholera devil when he pulls their tiles down and disinfects their houses. Also they stick between the lines and consequently to their patrol work, and don't go smoking pipes by little cosy fires beside the aloes. I think R.'s prescription was fairly shrewd. Many men would merely have laughed at the men's fears, and would neither have shaken their beliefs nor given them something new to think of. That was

the way the great Columba scored off the Druids and Picts. "I don't know about your astronomy or your fine music, or tales of ancestors and heroes, but I'm telling you, old Baal himself, with all his thunder and lightning, will not be so much as touching the least hair on your head if you were just to hold up this trifle of two sticks of wood. And if you do not believe me you will be burning for ever, and for evermore ! "

Saturday, 23rd.—Wrote to a friend in Madras to engage rooms and walked to the European Stores; they are excellent, you can get pretty nearly everything—I even found sketch books to my taste. The roads are the things to be remembered, their breadth and splendid trees are delightful, but their length is terrible. Not again will I take a long walk in cantonments ! "The 'ard 'igh road" in the west is bad enough, but when it's glaring sun on this red, hard soil, however bright and light the air, you soon get fatigued on foot.

Met D. and G. at shops, they were shopping on their own account and I on mine, for I've never found men's shopping and ladies' go well together, though for two ladies together shopping seems to be pure joy. We went to the bank to change a cheque into something suitable for travel. You have choice in India of silver rupees, value 1s. 4d., a few of which weigh about a ton, or notes. The notes are like those we get in Scotland, if you can believe me ! I held out for gold, so there was a call for the Bank Manager, and a procession to the safe; of self, Manager and keys, a clerk, and three or four "velvet-footed" white-robed natives. I wish some home bankers I know could have seen the classic bungalow Bank, with its Pompeian pillars, and the waiting customers seated in the verandah, and trailing, flowery, heavy-leaved creepers with blooms of orange and white dangling from the capitals of the pillars. One of the customers waiting in the verandah was a bearded priest, with black bombazine frock and white topee; a Celt for certain by his hand and eye; and by his

polite manners and intelligent expression a Jesuit, I would guess; and there were two ladies—spinsters and country bred I'd say, and poor, to judge by pale, lined faces and the look of wear about their pith hats and sun-faded dresses. Inside were white-robed figures just distinguishable at desks, their faces invisible in the deep shadow. And there was heat! and a continual "chink, chink" of counted rupees, and outside in the sun, two impatient ladies waiting in a victoria. At last we got the coin, and were faint with heat and hunger by the time we got home to lunch,—this to show the climate of Bangalore; but perhaps my readings of the temperature make it out to be hotter than it is.

. . . I do not write much about cooking, and the table, in these notes, do I? so just one word here, allow me. . . . Do not waste pity on dear friends and relatives out here on the score of food. Truly the climatic conditions are not such as so give great appetite, but the food itself is excellent, beef, *par example*; I'd never seen better beef than the hump you get here, and the fish would be considered quite good in London, and there are various vegetables and fruits; even strawberries you can get occasionally from the hills, and then the curries are just as good as they are said to be. The best way to make them is—but space forbids! . . . I think the reason they are cracked up so much is because they are almost half vegetable so they suit the climate; being suitable, they have been so long practised that their making is an art that only an amateur might imitate at home.

. . . That squirrel—to change the subject—on a branch outside the verandah, is cheeping so that one can barely think, or even write! It is as like a rat as a squirrel, with two yellowish stripes side; its tail is carried in squirrel's at home, but it thank Heaven our squirrel note like this little beast. It runs about every bungalow's



down the length of each the same way as our is not half so bushy, and has not a brain-piercing

verandah and the compound trees, and its note is like a creaking wheel-barrow going along slowly, then it gets faster till it is like the blackbird's scream when frightened out of the gooseberries. It makes many people grow quite bald—this, another piece of information, I have gathered from my cousin Robert! He also tells me they take wool out of his drawing-room cushions to line their nest. For further information of this kind the reader may care to refer to the writings of Mark Twain; he writes a great deal about this squirrel—says it is the same as the "chip munk" in his "erroneous, hazy, first impressions of India."

We have just been asked to a Christmas Tree over the way at twelve o'clock mid-day, but we think it will be rather too hot for us to go then. My often quoted informant tells me that seeing there are no fir trees here they use instead a tamarisk branch, and its feathery, pine-like needles look almost as well as our fir trees at home, and go on fire in much the same way. We do not have a Christmas Tree or a dance for the Servants' Hall, but R. and D. have sent them a notice and they appear tidied up till their black hair shines again. R. has some difficulty in remembering the names of the second and third generations, but makes a good attempt. I am certain I couldn't remember, or care for, even the senior male servants' names. They each get a small sum of money, which is received with beaming smiles. One little mite comes guilelessly round for a second payment and is told she must not. It is in vain you try to sketch them as they stand naturally; they see the corner of your eye with their's even though you are pretending to read the "Pioneer," and once they know you look they pull themselves together, if they are sitting they rise, and if they are standing they run, or go on salaaming.

To-day I'd such a sell in this respect—went to the Maharajah's Palace, a miniature Abbotsford, to leave cards, and just as were passing a neighbouring compound, there appeared under the trees a glorious covey of red

chupprassies seated in a circle on the ground, their scarlet and gold and white uniforms glaring in the sunbeams that shot through the foliage—such purple shadows—such a suggestion of colour, and gossip, or tales of the East! We pulled up a hundred and fifty yards off, I am sure, with a hedge between us, and only looked sideways at them to make notes, but in two seconds they were all up and at attention, and two came running forward for Sahib's orders and cards, so I drove away lamenting. The Red Chupprassies, by the way, or "corrupt lictors," are official messengers wearing red Imperial livery, who are attached to all civil officers in India. See Mr Aberich-Mackay on the subject in "Twenty-one Days in India."

. . . Packing to go to Madras, and very sorry to leave Bangalore and its wide compounds and parks and bazaars, and our very kind hosts. I have not mentioned the military element in Bangalore, nor the Gymkhana, nor the Club, for, to my sorrow, I've seen nothing of them! The museum I did see—went to it twice; I believe few people stationed here have seen it once! There is a collection of stuffed Indian birds which interested and finally appalled me by its numbers; and models of Indian fish, also very interesting.

My packing brought me more natural history interest—my packing and R.'s unpacking. R., in his office on one side of the house, opened some bundles of papers and so dispersed a colony of small black ants; they apparently thought my dressing-room would be restful, and trekked across the matting of three rooms and settled in my pile of correspondence—thought they'd be undisturbed poor things,—they had had to climb to the top of a desk to settle in these papers. When I moved these one or two thousand ants, and white cocoons, were scattered on the matting, where they quickly collected themselves again under some sketches and a folio on the floor. Then I took up another paper, and in vexation shook ants and

cocoons into a bowl of painting water which was on the floor, and the poor little devils who were able to swim, after their first surprise, began pulling the cocoons together in the centre of the bowl and piled one on the top of the other in a heap till the lowest became submerged. So I said, "here is honest endeavour, and help those who help themselves"—and dropped them a raft in shape of an inch of paper, and on to it the survivors went, and hauled in one whitey-blue chrysalis after another. Then an ant went up to the side of the bowl by the handle of the painting brush and shouted or signalled for help to another fellow below on the matting, and it went and got hundreds of willing helpers. Now they are saving the remainder, and wiring to their friends, I've no doubt.

I leant over the bowl like a minor clumsy Providence and watched the V.C. sort of action for quite a long time,—and suppressed cheers,—but Burmah called, and the Boy waited, so I had to leave them to Pucca Providence for a little. In half an hour by the clock all were rescued —(five hundred ants and almost as many cocoons!) Even the ants that had got under water, which I thought were drowned, were pulled out, and revived. Then they formed a new colony under my water colour, "The Landing of Lord Minto at the Appolo Bundar."

I have had an entertaining half-hour with them, but they will be glad we are gone. Here comes Krishna, the deft handed, to pack sketches and all; I must supervise him, and see that he does not pack my cousin's soap, matches, and pieces of string along with his increasing collection of these articles in a corner of my kit bag.

CHAPTER XX

BANGALORE TO MADRAS

THIS is the broad gauge Madras line. The cars run as smoothly as oil on water—I can write perfectly well, or as well as usual to be exact,—and there is gas, electric light, fairly soft cushions to sleep on, and nice wide berths. The fares are moderate and the arrangements for food, etc., are good; how can I say more, than that they are as well done as on the line we have just left—the Southern Maharatta Railway.¹

Our views on the road were a breadth of night-blue sky and stars, and a sweep of obscure plain, and the glimmer of the carriage lights on the hedge of aloes alongside, and crowds at stations with dark faces against white lamp-lit walls, the natives running about heaped with sheets to keep them warm—the temperature at 70°.

I must make a note here *en route* to Madras that before we left Krishna brought his wife and her sister and their children to pay their respects to us before we left Bangalore; he has placed them there while he takes the world for his pillow and follows our fortunes. They were mighty superior looking Hindoos, elegantly draped in yellow striped with red, with light yellow flowers in their smooth black hair and their faces were quite comely, but you couldn't look at them as they spoke for the pink in their mouths from chewing betel. The raw pink is such an ugly contrast to their rather pretty

¹ The mileage in 1901 of Indian Railways was 25,373. This mileage is somewhat larger than that of France and of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and two and a half times that of Italy, and the development is phenomenal.—MURRAY.

brown complexions. If I'd had the designing of these people I'd have made their nails and the soles of their feet dark too, also the inside of their mouths, like well bred terriers. They gave G. and myself each a lime and a very tidy bouquet of roses and ferns. You think nothing of being garlanded in this country with wreaths of flowers. My host and hostess had collars of flowers to the eyes the other day for some reason or other. I suppose that because the white man won't take "presents" he must take flowers and limes. On our part we gave each of these good people a small token in silver, with which return compliment they seemed highly pleased, and Krishna addressed us: standing straight he puckered his little face, so dark against his white turban, and wept, saying, "Father and Mother and all that I have I leave to follow Massa" or "my sahib" —I can never make out which he says, and in reply I murmured something about "absence making the heart grow fonder"—and felt quite touched; but R. tells me that this weeping can be turned on by natives at any time, so when he transacts business with weepy people, he says very gently, "Will you please wait a little and weep later," and they stop at once and smile and begin again just at the polite moment. I am convinced this is the case, though it seems to us almost a physical impossibility, that a man grown-up can turn on tears without heroics in a book or a novel or play to start them; "the gentle Hindoo" seems even a more fitting term than I'd have thought it was! . . . The people grew more noisy as we got south, the racket they make along this line at night at stations qualifies the comfortable berths and well-hung carriages.

A good deal, if not all, of the charm of travel went, about midnight. I awoke in the dark and just distinguished a native stealing into our carriage, whereon I showed a leg, and half rose, with intent to kill, or throw out. He advanced stealthily and held out

his hand in a way I knew, and whispered, "plague inspection," and I meekly gave him my wrist to feel; he touched my arm somewhere for an indivisible point of time and withdrew into the night! Then a dark lady in dark dress and straw hat, became faintly visibly for a second, and felt G.'s wrist. By that time we were both half awake to the fact that it was a plague inspection; in a minute or two a third person came in, but I was too sleepy to notice what he said—but I am quite certain I did not pray for any of them.

In the grey of the morning, in a most comfortable, restful sleep, we were awakened again, and were asked for plague passports—and hadn't any. I believe the third intruder may have called to give me one; at any rate, I had to hunt about on a platform crowded with natives and other poor Britishers in pyjamas, in the same plight as myself and looking mighty cross, and finally got two pieces of paper, each with all sorts of horrible instructions and threats thereon, and un-understandable orders to show ourselves somewhere for examination for the next ten days. Each pass was prepared in triplicate, "original to be retained for record, the duplicate to be delivered to the traveller and the triplicate sent *without delay* to the officer who has to examine him for ten days," etc., etc., and the traveller is warned any breach of terms will entail prosecution with imprisonment for a term up to six months, or fine up to Rs. 1000, "or both!" And the passport officer, amongst a hundred and one other things, has to ascertain whether there is any sickness or death in your *house*, or if you exhibit any symptoms of plague or deadly sickness—this for us, the poor cold-weather tourists, with never a house or home but our portmanteaux! Your father's name and your caste and your occupation are also demanded, and your district, *tulluq*, village, and street. An income-tax paper is plain sailing to this complicated nightmare of the early morning—you vow and swear you will never come to Madras again.

It is wonderful how breakfast clears the air, and the drive from the station through the town helped to cheer us up. Madras smells rather, and though there are open ditches and swampy places that make one think of fever; they say it's healthy. I suppose the sea, and the surf in the air, are disinfectants. The people in the street are not a patch on Bangalore people in looks or dress. I had to drive from our hotel soon after our arrival some three miles to the docks, and of the thousands of people I passed, there was not one woman with draperies arranged in the classic folds we saw in Bangalore; their worn bundles of dirty white drapery seemed just to be thrown on anyhow, and their type of face was much more elementary than that of the natives, even so little to the north as Mysore—Apologies for such rude sketches.

I'd just begun to vote Madras a sell when a line of thin-stemmed trees came in sight—tamarisks, I think—with feathery grey-green pine-like foliage and deep shadows, and figures under them on white sand, and through the trunks a great sweep of blue ocean, real southern blue—and I thought of turtles and the ^{madras} early traders, and John Company, and forgot about the ugly figures and the smells in the town. A little farther on, I came on the harbour with a few ocean-going crafts, and the *Renown*, waiting for the Prince, conspicuous in brilliant white and green on her water-line.

We had by this time decided to go to Burmah, so I'd come to the docks to Binney & Co. to see about berths.



Bangalore

An article I read by an engineer—my thanks for it—called, “Fourteen days leave from India,” in *T. P.’s Weekly*, and Mr Fielding Hall’s “Soul of the People,” helped to decide our going farther east. The article described vividly the change to the better in regard to the colouring and people in coming from India to Burmah. If India then seemed to me picturesque, it was surely worth the effort to cross the little bit of sea to Rangoon. It was difficult to leave the harbour and the Masulah boats; they are thoroughly ugly yet perfectly well-fitted for their work! They are almost like the shape of children’s paper boats, high out of the water, over four feet freeboard and seven feet beam, and I’d say about twenty-five to thirty feet over all, with practically flat bottoms. Six or seven rowers perch on bamboo thwarts, level with top of the gunwale, and row with bamboos with flat round blades tied to their ends. They come stem on through the low surf on the harbour strand, then just as they are touching the shore, are swung broadside on, the natives spring out into the shoal water, and out comes the lading, piece by piece, on their shoulders sacks, bales, boxes, etc., and all the time the boat is bumping up the sloping sand sideways and unharmed apparently by the seas bursting on its outside. Ugly is no word for them, but fit they were, though Ruskin’s “Beauty of Fitness” did not appear. They have but few timbers, but these are heavy, and they have only three planks on either side and two on the bottom, heavy teak planks sewn together! This coarse sewing with cocoa-nut fibre cord laces a straw rope against the inside of the seam, and this apparently swells when wet and gives elasticity and play, and keeps out a considerable amount of water. But I see there’s a good deal of baling done, and the baggage, with the water in bilge and spray over all, must get wet outside at least—Fixed up about cabins for Rangoon, lunched at our hotel, the Connemara, then hired a gharry or victoria—I’m not sure which the

conveyance we hired by the week should be called—and drove to the racecourse, an A.1. course, and met several friends there. I was particularly impressed by the general appearance of beauty and refinement of our country-women in Madras, and by the fashionableness of their attire. I thought there was a sensation—I will only whisper this—of a slightly rarified official atmosphere at this meeting, I saw no one caper. But it must be borne in mind that most of the people there were officials and wives of officials, serving a great empire, so perhaps it might be unbecoming for such to laugh and play; and I take it there is even a limit to the degree of a smile when you are on the official ladder, that it is then seemly, even expedient, to walk with a certain dignity of pace—so you show the sweep of the modern skirt to great advantage. As a foil were one or two blooming girls, “just out,” and bound to have a “good time.” Their exuberant buoyancy will be toned down, I am told, after two seasons here (I’d have thought one would have been enough), and up north people are more gay, the atmosphere here is considerd to be very damping.

The native life spread round three sides of the course, six deep. The horses were mostly small, uncommonly nice-looking beasts, with a good deal of Arab blood. Of course G. and I selected winners and had nothing on; but I have known of others who have met with similar misfortune at meetings nearer home.

Back to the Connemara, through a moving population of native men returning from the races. They mostly wore Delhi caps (like “smoking caps”), long hair in a knot and long light tweed coats, round their thin bare legs, floppy linen shaded from white to rose-red, at the lower edge a bad red and a dirty white; there was red dust in the air, and a hot sunset in front—rather sickening colour. The whole population seems to have had a holiday to see the Sahibs run some fifteen to twenty horses. They seem rather an unmanly looking crowd. The pink that pre-

dominates is what you see in an unfortunate hybrid white and red poppy, an analine colour, as unpleasant as that of red ink—Give me back—give me back Bangalore and its colour, our life on the line, a quiet siding beneath the bough, the table laid on the track, and the moon looking down through the branches.

28th December.—There is a thing I cannot understand how the farther we wander from home the more people we meet whom we know or know about, or who know us or our kith and kin. And how do we so often run up against people we met on the ship coming out? You'd have thought India big enough to swallow up a shipload of passengers for ever and aye, without their ever meeting again, but even since yesterday we have met quite a number of the passengers of the *Egypt*—three regular “pied poudré” wanderers, as the French called the Scots long ago, and a lady just out, full of interest in everything. She actually wants to see native bazaars and museums! to the horror of her hosts, who have been out here for long and whose thoughts are only of the tented field, and pay, and going home.

. . . A long trail to shipping people again—former visit resulted only in a protracted interview with a polite native clerk, so the toil had to be done twice! Then to the post office at the docks; borrowed a rusty pen there from another native clerk and did a home letter. What a fine building it is, and what a motley slack lot of people you see there! Near me a group of half-naked natives were concocting and scratching off a wire between them, others squatted on the floor and beat up their friends black hair for small game. One man made netting attached to the rail round the ticket office, seated of course, another knitted, and everyone chewed betel nut. The walls of this very handsome building were encrusted with dried red expectoration, and scored with splashes of lime from fingers—the lime is chewed with the betel nut. These nasty sort of natives might be improved or got rid

of, and say, Burmese introduced. What is the good of having a country or a forest if you don't breed a good stock, be it either deer or people ?

Changed to airier rooms on our second evening here ; got everything shifted in pretty short time. We thus lost a pretty view and, the smell of the river, " the Silvery Cooum."

It was warm and damp last night, and many mosquitoes were inside our curtains—didn't feel up to painting much, but took out a sketch book and our hired victoria ; the horse jibbed and tied itself and the traces and the victoria into a knot and kicked up a racket generally in the hotel porch, and we got it extracted in time, then it insisted on taking the victoria along the pavement till I was glad G. was not with me—a fool would have stayed in it—I found I needed a shave, and left as it pranced past a barber's shop. The barber, an Italian, spoke six languages ; I should think he felt Madras deadly dull.

After the breakdown of my prancing steed—rickshawed from the barber's to the Marina. The Marina is only an empty sweep of sand, and beyond that a strip of blue sea and a pale blue sky and a few fleecy clouds, simple enough material for a picture ; but by my faith ! could I only have put down the colour of that mid-day glow from the sand, and the feeling of space, and the two blues, of the sea and sky, and the flick of colour from a scrap or two of drapery on sunny brown figures tailing on to the long ropes of a Seine net ! Out beyond the surf mere dots in the blue swell, were more figures swimming about the ends of the net splashing to keep in the fish, and in the edge of the white surf the fishermen's children were sporting—in with a header through the glassy curve of a wave, and out again on their feet on the sand and away with a scamper. Some matrons sat near me, and the smallest naked kids played round me as I sketched, and two, really pretty girls, the first I've seen in India, with short skirts and their black hair still wringing wet,

came up from the sea and looked on. Barring these fisher-people, the miles of beach were empty as could be. What light and heat there was, a crow passing cast a darker shadow on the sand than its own sunlit back, and a pale pink convolvulus that grew here and there on the inner sand cast a shadow of deepest purple. The brown naked men, sweating at every pore, pulled the drag rope of the net very slowly up the soft dry sand step by step, their damp, brown muscles sparkling with vivid blue lights. I think this was the best bit of India I had seen so far, and after a stuffy night in town to get into the blaze of light and watch these fellows fishing on the wide blue ocean from such a southern strand was worth a month on Loch Leven or an hour with a fifty pounder. I think the nets must be over a hundred fathoms ; they were being pulled in for two hours after I came, and must have been hauled for hours before that, seven men to each rope ! As the ends came near shore, the boys plunged in and joined their seniors, and all looked like a herd of seals gambolling. I saw a father drubbing his boy beyond the surf ; the boy had evidently gone out too soon, and got exhausted coming back. It must have relieved the father's feelings, each thump sent the lad under water. As the bag of the net came towards the hard sand the silver fish showed ; very few I thought for all the trouble and hands employed ; not more than twenty lbs. weight I'd think, all silvery and sky blue and emerald green ; bream and sand-launces and silver fish like whitebait and herring, all fresh and shining from the beautiful sea mint—the colour beyond words—green breakers, white surf, blue swell beyond, and brown figures with red and variously coloured turbans ; young and old, all with such deep shadows on the sand, a scene Sarolea, the Spaniard, might make a show of painting. A few outsiders, men with clothes, two policemen and a satellite appeared as the bag came ashore. Scenting plunder they sailed down and nailed four of the biggest and best fish—

horrid shame, I thought it, these miserable imps in uniform of our Government, to steal from my naked fisher friends. I hope someone in authority will read this and have them tied heel and neck.

. . . In the afternoon G. and I went again to the Marina ; I don't think anything more unfashionable could have been dreamed of. It was again exquisite—all changed to evening colours, and the wide drive along the shore had a few promenaders, and a few carriages were drawn up at the side with ladies and children eating the air. They appeared to be unofficial people, white traders, I'd fancy, the rest Eurasians and a few Europeanised natives. There are pretty drives to the Marina, through park-like roads beautifully bordered with flowering trees, such a pleasing place that I wonder the official class does not drive there.

Through the outskirts home ; the light fading and forms becoming blurred in the warm evening twilight, past lines of neat little houses, mostly open towards the street, belonging to Eurasians. In one a children's party—pretty children in white, girls with great tails of dark hair—they were pulling crackers and all wore coloured paper hats—next door in a room with chintz covered European furniture and photographs, a pretty girl—just a little dark, played a concertina to an immaculately dressed youth, who twirled the latest thing in straw hats.

Then to dinner at The Fort to dine with Major B. C.—a tiresome long drive in the dark with a slow horse ; at the end of it we crossed a drawbridge over a moat—full of water we could see, from the faint reflection of a white angle of a bastion on the dark surface—rumbled through subterranean arches, white-washed and lamplit, and felt as we came into the square that we had left modern India outside in the darkness and had got back to the old India of the Company days. A pale crescent moon lit up part of a building here and there, old formal Georgian buildings and old-fashioned gun-embrasures and a church like St. Martin in the Fields. One half expected to meet someone

in knee breeches and wig, perhaps a Governor, Elihu Yale, or M'Crae, the seaman, Clive, or Hastings coming round some dusky corner or across the moonlit square. There were a few soldiers here and there, taking their rest with grey shirt-sleeves rolled up. We had to mark time a little, as we had started half-an-hour too soon, so I went on to the parapet and looked from the flagstaff east into the night, and heard the Bay of Bengal surf pounding on the sands. I spoke for a little to two soldiers lounging there on the parapet edge ; they told me they were Suffolks and felt it warm. What interesting talks one could have had with these men, as a stranger, and with no impending dinner and no white waistcoat. I am not surprised Kipling made some of his best tales about privates ; they are of the interesting mean in life, between the rulers and the ruled. These private soldiers, or fishermen and sailors can tell you stories better than any other class of men, but you must not show the least sign of gold braid if you would draw them out. I remember one night, I went round the dockyard bars at a northern seaport with a retired naval officer to get first hand information about a trip we planned to Davis Straits for musk oxen—with the artist's modest manner and the suggestion of a drink thrown in, I'd have got any number of yarns from them till "Eleven o'clock, Gentlemen, and the Police outside ! " But my friend in mufti was spotted at once ; for he marched up to the middle of the bar, looked right and left and snapped out his order ; but before he opened his mouth the whaling men were shouldering into little tongue-tied groups—the quarter deck air came in like a draught and took them all slightly aback, and we got never a bit of information.

There was a Canon at dinner, and two engineers and ladies. We talked of India and home, and these kind people's children over seas, and we talked art too. One engineer and his wife were both excellent artists ; and we talked of the Burmese and the religion of Buddah, not very loud, of course, considering the company, and, of course, of the "Soul of the

People," a book at least three of the party had read and I had just dipped into ; and we arranged to go and see the church and the records and plate therein, dating from the Company days, and amongst other interesting things the record of Clive's marriage, with Wellesley's signature as witness appended. The house we dined in is supposed to be that in which Clive twice attempted his own life, and twice his pistol misfired. Then we tore ourselves away, with belated sympathy for our host and his next day's work.

I have mentioned preparations for the Prince in Bangalore ; here, too our host had many arrangements to make, to forward the Imperial train north to Mysore after their return from Burmah.

As we leave the house the lamplight from the windows shines on purple blooms of creepers on the fort wall a few yards from the front door, and over it comes the low boom of the surf and the scent of the sea and flowers—Through the sleeping soldier town, the Syce running in front gives some pass-word to the sentry as we rattle over the cobbles under the archway and rumble over the drawbridge ; and we are out into the dusty darkness again. And so home, to bed and mosquito curtains in the Connemara.

Sleep we would fain have till later than the time of rising for the crows, and sparrows, and hotel servants, but to sleep after sunrise is almost impossible ; these abominable hoody crows and sparrows sit on the jalousies and verandah and caw and chirp most harshly. "If I were viceroy," I'd put forth a word to have the whole lot exterminated. It could be done in two seasons, then the harmless, and game birds, would have a chance. It was once done in our country in the reign of James the IV. The tree in which a crow built for three successive years was forfeited to the Crown, and went of course to our Fleet, *Eh Mihi !* We had a proper fleet in those days before the great Union, and proper Commanders—read Pittscottie's description of the ships, *e.g. The Yellow Carvel, The Lion, and The Great Michael*, the envy of Europe, for which the forests of Fife

were depleted, which carried "thirty-five guns and three hundred smaller artillery, culverins, batter-falcons, mylands, double-dogs, hagbuts, and three hundred sailors, a hundred and twenty gunners, and one thousand soldiers besides officers"—and of the sea fights with the Portuguese and English. Our coasts were defended then ! James IV. could *put 120,000 mounted troops in the field in nine days*, and every able-bodied man learned the use of arms ; this was before The Union with our so often successfully invaded neighbour—now, we have left to defend ourselves, one regiment of cavalry !

P.S.—As this goes to print the Scots Greys follow our kings to England ; and we are left with *one mounted soldier* in our capital, in bronze, in Princes Street : and to add to our glorious portion in this Union, it has lately been tactfully decreed that in future English nobility will take precedence of Scottish nobility IN SCOTLAND ! It will be curious to observe what the populace will say to this when they come to hear of it. I wonder if our nobility will take it lying down—and if I may be forgiven this extra wide digression ?

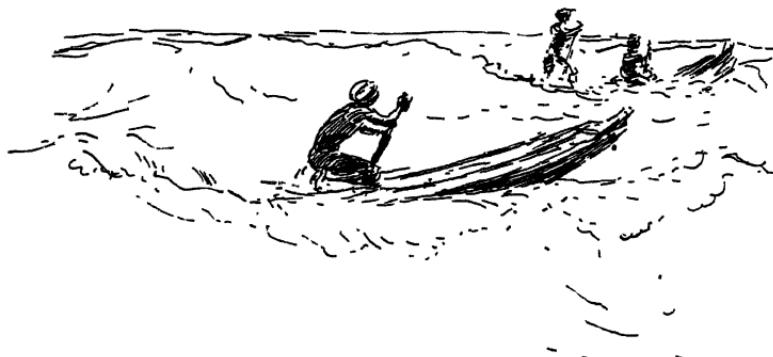
CHAPTER XXI

I have had a delightful fishing day; at an early hour found myself again at the shore, nominally to paint, but in truth because it was hot and stuffy in town, and the thought of the surf and clear air made the beach irresistible. A rickshaw man used his legs to take me to the sands edge; and they were empty as yesterday of all but the few fishermen and their families. The colour effect, however, was not so brilliant, but was pleasant enough—the sky soft grey and the water grey too, but colourful—the heat enough to cook one!



I watched the young idea learning surf rafting—a study fascinating enough for a whole day—a tiny imp with a great pointed log, and the white breakers for playthings. He sat on its stern, his knees and toes on the sand, and held its stem seawards till the inrush of shallow white-laced water was deep enough to float it and take his little anatomy a voyage of a few yards on the sloping outrush, then he jumped off and waited till

the surf brought his black ship back. With what quickness he noted the exact moment to run in and catch its stem, and slew it round so that it would broach ashore on its side, and how neatly he avoided being caught between it and the sand. The fishermen's boats, or catamarans as they are called here, though they have no resemblance to the Colombo catamaran, are made of four of these pointed logs tied side by side. I suppose this little chap was playing at his future work. He had made a little collection on the dry sand of two or three shell-fish and beasts that burrow in the sand, and whenever he went to sea, three crows stalked up to these, when he would leave the log and scamper after them, then run back all over dry sand and tumble into the surf again, to come up laughing and wet and shining like copper—I should say it was nicer than being at school.



Two of his clothless seniors came in, as I sketched, from the deep swell outside the surf, through the breakers slanting-wise. It was a treat to see them paddling their four logs, almost side on to the breaking surf, where our boats could not safely venture; one knelt behind on the thick ends of the two prolonged middle logs, the other amidship—their heads only showed above a breaker, the next moment they were on its crest, the surf foaming over their knees—down again into

another hollow, then up, and with a surge the lumber drove its nose on the sand, the stern threw up, and the two nipped into the water at either end ; another surge swung the stern round, and shoved the raft broadside on far up the sand, and they were landing their nets—all done as easily as you could pull up a dog-cart and step out ! Of course they are not inconvenienced with clothes, and the water and sands are both comfortably warm ; the little difficulty must be to jump at the right time and place, so as to avoid being thrown off, and getting rolled under the logs. Bow seemed to hop off in front and to the outside a little, just before she touched, and Stroke a half a second later, but the manœuvre was too quick for me to follow more than one of the men's actions exactly.

Whilst I watched this extremely rapid landing, my acquaintances of yesterday were pulling at the long ropes from either end of the Seine net, which was extended very far out at sea. When the ends were within fifty yards of the shore the knowing old seniors went tumbling through the surf, and kept swimming and splashing to frighten the fish from the mouth of the V shape into the bag in the middle ; the women folk and children tailed on to the ropes along with the men, joking and laughing, for their men out in the water told them there were lots of fish ! You did not need to know Tamil or Telugu to learn this, the delight was so evident—It was evidently to be the catch of the season ! The excitement and movement grew splendid as the bag, still a few yards from shore, was throttled in some way under water. First a small outer bag was pulled ashore, then a bigger one holding the day's catch, a Scotch cartload of fish—a bumper bag. They were all so pleased and jolly, and were puffing and panting and wet with the last struggle to get the fine-meshed bag through the surf. When it was opened like a great brown purse, there lay the wealth of the Bay of Bengal ! in silver and blue and rose and

yellow. About half the fish were pure silver, the rest violet, emerald green, pure blue, and some red like mullet, with lemon yellow fins, and the colour of the brown men and the women's faded draperies round the glittering haul was delicious. The wrangling, not Billingsgate at all—milder even than Parliamentary—was loud enough, and continuous. I left them taking away the fish in baskets, and freshly minted money never looked so beautiful. How they divided I couldn't tell; it seemed as if each helped himself or herself as each thought fit.

I must note the afternoon of this delightful day, though noting these "first impressions" of India seems rather a big order; for each day seems so full of delightfully new experience, and fascinating sights, that I am sure you see in one day here—at least a *nouveau* does—more interesting things than one could in a week in Europe.

... Our civil servant friend, who paints like Sam Bough, asked us to see his bungalow on the Adyar River, also to look at sketches. We drove three miles on a broad road under banyan trees and palms with patches of corn and native huts, and an occasional bright dress and brass bowl of a woman showing between the dark stems, and pulled up at half-a-dozen bungalows by mistake, and left cards at others, to the owners of which we had introductions, and after a considerable hunt turned up at the bungalow we aimed at. Here were open views, in front the Adyar River and the many-arched Elphinstone Bridge, and palm groves, and down the river to the left, the sand bar across its mouth, and to the right views of the river's many windings in palm groves. Such a place, with the feeling of the sea being within reach, would make me, I think, tolerate living in Madras for a little. We had a great causerie over pictures of home scenes, and of many places in India. Then we got into a double-scull Thames boat and slipped away down towards the bar with wind and current—extremely delightful, I

thought it, getting into such a well-appointed boat on such a pretty piece of river. As we sailed fish played round us; some, like bream or silvery perch, skipped out of the water in a series of leaps like miniature penguins! The wind fell and we rowed, down to the sand spit and heard the surf on the other side and got out and felt that we were at last actually on "India's Coral Strand." There were pretty delicately coloured shells, and here and there a pale pink convolvulus growing low, with grey-green leaves. The river just managed to cut its way through the sand-bar into the surf; beyond it, three or four miles to the north, we could see the two spires in Madras above the palms, St Thomé's and St Mary's in the Fort; to the south-west, the sand and palms and the line of surf stretched in perspective till they faded together on the horizon.



As the sun got low the sky became gorgeous red—what tropical colour there was—the hard sand flushed and paled, yellow to brown in a long waving ribband at the edge of the receding wave, then turned lavender laced with dull foam, as the first of the following breakers came running up, wetting the sand again to renew the

golden glow. The outer sea and the horizon were purple and the white of the surf seemed almost green against the orange and red of the sky. Our friends told me they often came to this beach ; and as they are artists, that is not to be wondered at : and I suppose some Madras people occasionally come down the river from the boat club a mile or two above, to picnic. I saw two men in flannels and two ladies — very fair ladies they were too—in the flattering twilight ; when a white dress turns the colour of a violet shell, and muslins die like a dream into the soft colours of the sand, and pale faces flush with the golden glow of the setting sun. We lost no pity on those exiles and their wandering on this foreign strand. A native or two passed ; nice and easy it is for them getting along the coast to Madras ! They just walked up the river a few yards and walked in, swam across and down stream, waded out on the far side, and never as much as shook themselves.

We shoved off again when the sky was positively burning with colour, hoisted our sail, and with a light sea breeze went up river towards the darkening groves of palms, guiding ourselves by the afterglow and the glint of a new moon, and lights from the few bungalows on shore.

As we sail we plan to return some day and do up one of these old Arabian Night bungalows. They look almost palatial with their terraces and flight of steps from the river and white pillars showing in the pale moonlight with dark palms and trees over them. They at the same time suggest something of Venice, and of the Far East. They would need repair, but rents are low.

It gets darker and we have difficulty in picking up marks—first the rock on our right from which we go dead across stream, to the high palm just visible against the night sky ; then up stream a bit, and across to avoid shoals. We row, for the wind has fallen away. Every now and then our blades touch gravel, and twice we go

right aground and have to shove off. Fish jump round us; two come in forward, pretty little silvery fellows with a potent smell of herring, one big fellow surges nearly ashore. As the boat-house and club lights appear we go hard and fast on to a bank, and a native wayfarer fording the river in the dark, whom we mistake for a Club servant expecting us, is ordered to shove us off, which he does and goes on his way without a word—"the gentle Hindoo" again.

The Club boat-house is a perfect treat! By the lamp-light I am sure I saw a score of double sculls, sixes, and possibly eights, and skiffs and punts—all sorts of river boats, and as far as I could see, all in order; the men who have both such a Club and boat-house are to be envied. The Club-house was a dream of white Georgian architecture, veiled in moonlight amongst great trees and palms. There were high silvery white pillars (Madras is famous for its marble white stucco) and terraces and wide steps and yellow light coming from tall open jalousies under verandahs. Winding paths led up to it, and along one of these we followed a native, who swung a lamp near the ground in case of snakes. In the Club were rooms for dining, reading, and dancing, all in the same perfect Georgian style.

I would have liked to stay, to see the dance that was going to begin, but it was late, and we were in flannels, and were three miles from home. The ball-room was entirely to my taste, an oval, with white pillars round it reflected in a light-coloured polished floor, overhead a domed roof with chrystal chandeliers, and smaller crystal lights round the sides.

On the road home we met motors, dog-carts, and men and ladies going to the dance; the motor dust here is twenty times thicker than at home; for half-a-mile after you pass a motor you see nothing—can't open your eyes in fact—then came a series of Rembrandts, in way-side lamplit stalls, and home to mosquitoes and late dinner.

31st December, Sunday.—Spent forenoon writing letters and working up sketches, and to make all smooth went to two churches and two temples in the afternoon ; a fairly good ending to the year. The first temple, a pile of architecture of debased wedding-cake style, thick with innumerable elastic-legged, goggled-eyed, beastly, indecent Hindoo divinities. Thence to a Roman Catholic church in St Thomé, the old Portuguese quarter—very pretty and simple in appearance. The half near the altar full of veiled European nuns in white and buff dresses. Nearer the door, where we sat, were native women and children, mostly in red, a few of them with antique European black bonnets and clothes ; and in their withered old faces you could imagine a strain of the early Portuguese settlers. The altar was, as usual, in colours to suit the simple mind ; the Madonna in blue and white and gold, with a sweet expression of youth and maternity, her cheeks were like china, and she dandled the sweetest little red-haired baby in a nest of gold rays, all against a rocky background. How telling the fair Viking type of baby must be to these little black-eyed, wondering worshippers, far more fascinating and wonderful, I am sure, than their miraculous six-armed gods. There were real roses too, such numbers of them, and altogether a good deal of somewhat gim-crack effect, but the whole appealed to me, for at least the idea of material beauty was recognised, and for a minute I forgot all the ugliness (= Evil) that our churches have caused, and the good (= Beauty) they have destroyed, and bowed and crossed myself like my neighbours. Then we drove to another church near the sea, St Thomés. The bones of St Thomas of the New Testament are said to be buried here. We only looked into it ; it was finely built, and inside at the moment was almost as empty as a Protestant church on a week-day. There was but one devotee, a black woman, confessing to a half-black man. We shuddered and escaped, and drove a few yards and saw “ The seas

that mourn, in flowing purple of their Lord forlorn,"—the wide long stretch north and south of white sand, and the log surf rafts, and the dark fishermen going up and down on the blue swell—and didn't we draw a breath of relief of God's pure air.

There was a log craft at the surf edge, with a kid playing beside it, his reflection perfect in the long back-wash. His father talked in a strange tongue to me, and I looked at the swell and considered, and saw black men out beyond the surf, and none of them apparently drowned, or in fear of sharks, so I left shoes and socks with G. and our coachman to look after her, and the syce to look after the carriage, and tucked up trousers and away we went together, my heart in my mouth! What joy—bang into and over the first breaker. I'd nearly stand upright to keep my waist dry, and down and up again—the movement quick and exhilarating; over two other breakers and we were away on the open rollers, and able to look round to the distant shore, where G. sat with my sketch-book and a gallery of brown figures. We paddled along to another craft out at sea that had pulled up its net. Two men were in it, and we made fast to it till they cleared the fish out of the net, and we took them in a matting bag on to our raft, where the water washed over them, and we took them ashore. It was curious to see how neatly and ably these men could haul a net and clear it of fish on four submerged logs—they could move about, stand and walk from one end of the logs to the other with freedom. With the net on board the logs were almost entirely submerged. Running ashore is the most sporting part of the procedure; we paddled along slanting towards the beach, waiting for the ninth wave to pass, then went straight for the sand for all we were worth, and got in in great style; I must say I nearly lost my balance landing, there were so many natives wading out to bear a hand that my eye wandered—but what a craft for the

purpose! I vow no boat I ever saw of the size could come on to hard sand with such a surf behind and not break and throw you out. It is really a sport with a capital S, though, as far as I can hear, white people don't go in for it, perhaps because it is said—on what authority I do not know—that the sharks prefer white people to the natives! The natives who swim in the surf apparently are not touched by them, yet you see no Europeans bathing on what I should think would be a delightful shore for bathing once you had got accustomed to diving through the surf. If I go surf-logging again I will take a change of trousers—Got on shoes, the natives standing three deep to see the Sahib get sand of his feet, extremely curious but quite polite. The rupee I gave my man pleased him very much, and the others all wanted to take me out again, or at least to have a rupee too. They were a nicer, bolder-looking lot of men than those in the town by a very long chalk.

We then went to another temple that was also worth seeing. There is a tank near it that would be beautiful, but for a monumentally ugly iron railing that has recently been put round it. It is distinctly British—who on earth did it? We were fortunate, for just before coming to the tank and temple, a christening party of Hindoos in their best clothes, with yellow flowers in black hair, and priests with long chanters and tom-toms playing, came out of some houses as we were passing. In a loosely formed procession they proceeded very slowly to the temple, the principals in a closed brougham in the middle. It was just like one of Tadema's pictures on the move—barring the brougham! The players led the way in white, with the dark wood chanters mounted with silver bells and mouthpieces, and made music with a little of the twang of our pipe chanter, but without the continuity and lift or crisp grace-notes. Young girls, with their faces tinted yellow with saffron, followed in dull red dresses. Behind the procession were classical-looking houses, and over

these appeared palms and banyan trees ; but in the middle was the prosaic old Waler, and the hired brougham, which was very distressing, for otherwise the subject was evidently "artistic," and combined just the proportions of sentiment and positive colour, which would have insured for its faithful depiction, a warm reception at any of our Royal Academical Exhibitions—the man in the street could see that !

Then home by the wide Marina, and the promenading Eurasians, and well-to-do traders in carriages. The official

people *must* all be at the Club and Gymkhana, or at Church. For choice I like the beach in the morning, the wide sweep of ocean, the full sun on the endless sandy shores, and the solitude.

This is a jotting, reduced by reproduction, of a native fishing in the surf—all that I have "creel'd" to-day.

. . . By Jove—its ten minutes to the New Year—time to think of our friends and relations, who will be sitting down to lunch and thinking of us;

and toasting us for a certainty. So, in the words of the song, of which these are all I know—

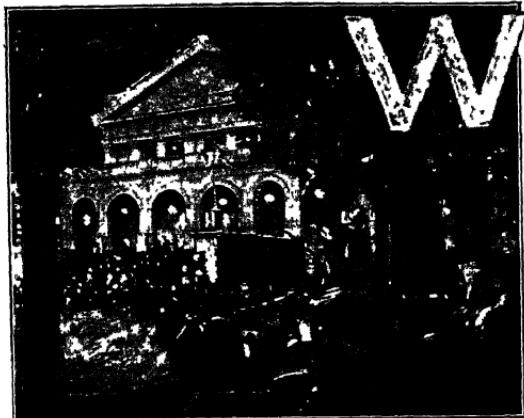
"Here's another kind love,
Here's another kind love,
Here's a health to everybody."

But first we must toast "Relations and Friends," and then "The Memory of the Dead and the Health of the Living," which being done, properly and in order, we may go to the window to hear the bells of St Giles and the cheering at the Cross. . . . Ah ! but it is too far.



CHAPTER XXII

1ST JANUARY 1906



E have "seen the New Year in," in a way, perhaps not quite so jollily as at home, but well enough however. And as we went to sleep, we did hear a little cheering, some jovial north country soldiers, I suppose; and the

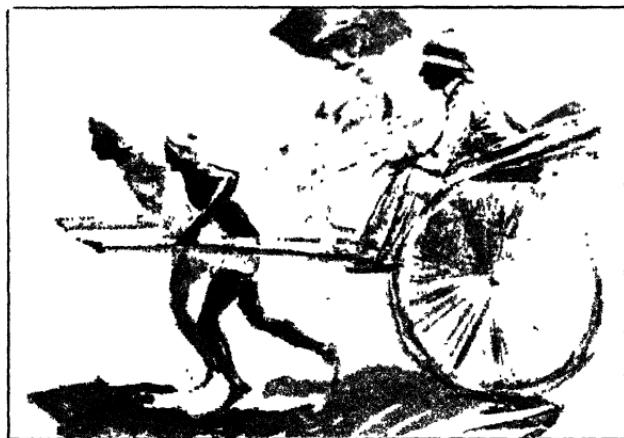
dogs were howling, and the moon shining, and the mosquitoes singing. They got their fill last night—came through a hole in the mosquito curtains, and our raid on them in the morning ended eight of their lives; but we were desperately wounded! G. got eight bites on one hand, which is serious, and means poulticing.

Various natives hung about this morning, and gave us each a lime and many salaams, and we are supposed to return the compliment in coin. It is rather an ingenious plan, and it is a dainty little yellow present, and costs them nothing, and flatters you; at least it does if you are a newcomer, and a very small tip pleases them.

Called at Government House on this first day of A.D. 1906, and signed Lord and Lady Ampthill's great new

visitors' volumes. Then we prowled round the Fort, and the Canon of St Mary's kindly left his work and showed us records and plate of the Company days, dated 1698, and some of which was given to the Church by the Governor Yale, afterwards the benefactor of Yale College of the United States of America. We saw Clive's marriage in the church records, with Wellesley's signature, and on the walls of St Mary's church saw the names of many Scots and English and Irish whose bones lie here and there in Indian soil, all lauded for "courage, devotion, and care of their men." Truly, "warlike, manly courage and devotion to duty" seem the flowers that flourish here-away. We saw the old colours of the Madras Fusiliers, now the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the first British regiment of the East Indian Company, and in which Sir John Malcolm, Sir Harry Close, and Lord Clive served.

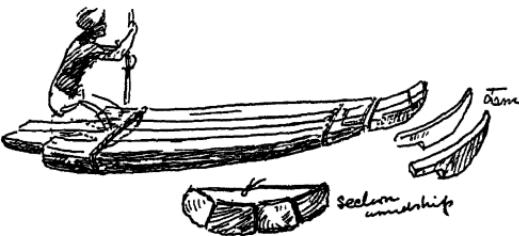
In afternoon went a long rickshaw ride through Blacktown to the North Beach. There saw a number of



well dressed Eurasians, boys and girls, paddling so timidly, they let the water come over their toes and no more; also saw a net lifted outside the surf, full of fish like spent herring. What a scramble there was for them on the beach by all classes—what fun and laughter, each one

robbing the other. The fish were out of condition and not of market value. I saw one blow struck but it was not returned, the man hit merely looked dreadfully offended, and the jabbering and laughing went on in a second. What a pity it is the railway spoils the north shore—it is the same in Bombay, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Madras, the best parts of our towns sacrificed. I believe if we owned Naples we would put a railway round the Bay.

I had the satisfaction of seeing the surf log-rafts at work again, and also saw one put together. When not in use the logs lie apart, to dry I suppose, and acquire buoyancy. It took not more than eight minutes to pull the four legs into position and string them together. The roping was done with a thin one-inch coir rope quickly and neatly, not so tight as to make all quite rigid. The actual roping took about two minutes. Here is a jotting of the way they are made. The logs at longest are about seventeen feet. It is as well to take note of these sort of things; you never know when your turn at the desert island may come, and young relations have desert islands at home. Or again, such a craft might come in handily in some out-of-the-way Highland or Norwegian loch, with on boat on it, and the trout rising in the middle.



1st January—*continued*.—This is a terribly long yarn for one day and it is not done yet! We went to the Government House reception in the evening in our best war paint. It is a yearly reception, I believe, given to all and sundry to keep them loyal, the very thing to do it too! and I know another country, north and west, where such shows might have this effect—if it is not too late—Drove there in our hired victoria in the hot dusk, and dust, in a rout of carriages, gharries, rickshaws, dog-carts, and every sort

of wheeled craft imaginable ; nabobs and nobodies, spry young soldiers in uniform, minus hats, driving ladies in chiffons and laces, natives, civilians, eurasians, now one ahead then the other, till we met in a grand block at the great gates, and then strung out orderly-wise and went on at a walk.

As we drove up the park we saw through great trees with dark foliage, the white banqueting hall with its very wide flights of steps and tall Ionic pillars bathed in moonlight, and closer, found there were two lines of native lancers, in dull red and blue, lined up the centre of the steps. The carriages pulled up three at a time, and the guests went flocking up the steps in the greenish silvery light to the top, where the warm yellow light met them from the interior, also an aide-de-camp as friend and guide to strangers, such as ourselves. Inside all was highly entertaining and splendid, and Western with a good deal of the Orient thrown in—I don't suppose any other country in the world could give a show a patch on this—not even Egypt ; the banqueting hall is splendidly large and well proportioned ;¹ with white pillars down the sides supporting galleries. At the far end there is a raised dais with red satin and gold couches and chairs, and mirrors and palms ; above these, white walls, and the King's portrait in red and blue and framed in gold : and round the sides, under the pillars, are more full-length portraits of Governors and their wives, Lord Elphinstone, Lady Munro, The Marchioness of Tweedale, Wellesley, Napier, and Ettrick, Grant Duff, Connemara, and others. Excepting the King's they all looked rather dark against so much marble-white wall space. Overhead, I am told, there was once a line of crystal chandeliers, which must have given a perfect finish to the room ; but these have been improved away for rather insignificant modern lights, and all over the roof are these hideous whirling electric fans which spoil the whole effect of the classic Georgian style—the

¹ 80 feet long, 60 feet broad. [Built to commemorate the fall of Seringapatam.]

swinging punkah can at least be good to look at, and even tolerable, if it is far enough off.

But here is a sketch of what I remember ; the guests divided up the room, blacks on one side, whites on the other, whether by accident or by design I know not, I should think and hope by intention. (So sorry this is not reproduced in colour.)

Lord and Lady Ampthill then came in, and preceeded by aides-de-camp in various uniforms, four abreast and



at arm's length, marched up the length of the room to the dais, with measured steps, not too short and not too slow—a very effectively carried out piece of ceremony, for the principals suited their parts well. Lord Ampthill is exceptionally tall, he wore a blue Court coat, well set-off by the white knee-breeches and stockings ; and Lady Ampthill is taller than other ladies and is very gracious. Perhaps you can make out in my sketch Lord Ampthill on the dais talking to some of the house party, and the tall lady on the right, talking to some of our party may stand for Lady Ampthill, escorted by Major Campbell.

The fireworks after the reception were, in my humble opinion, very fine indeed, but I confess my experience of these displays is extremely limited. The effect was enhanced by the soft colourfulness of the Eastern night, framed by great white arches round the verandah, and the groups beneath these, of ladies, fair, and dark, in soft raiment.

As we came away the wide steps were covered with groups of ladies, officers, and natives, standing and sitting, with arms and jewels, white gloves, silks and laces glittering in moonlight or lost in shadow; above on the terrace the glow of lamps from the hall shone on the last departing guests, and the tall moonlit pillars led the eye up to the blue night sky. I daresay five men out of six would have found the whole show a bore, possibly even more tiresome than this account of it, but our friend and his wife enjoyed it all, for they paint, and see things, which makes all the difference.

2nd January.—Drove to Binney's for last time, and secured tickets to Rangoon. The berths are not allocated till you get on board, a cheerful arrangement: and they are dear! Loafed about harbour watching many cargoes and many people; tried in Blacktown to get women's draperies such as I'd seen in Bangalore and Dharwar, but all we saw were more crude in colour and overdone with patterns—couldn't get the simple blues or reds with yellow or blue margins. Not an eventful day, but in the afternoon we drove again to the sands at the mouth of the Adyar to collect shells and we saw more than we could carry away in memory, watched the crabs scuttling over the sands like mice, and into regular burrows in the sand, collected seeds from various trailing plants, and saw a glorious sunset—someone told me Indian sunsets were poor things! and made a jotting or two, too hasty to be of use to the world in general.

3rd.—Painted, and wrote these notes in spite of mosquitoes and these three times cursed crows.

CHAPTER XXIII

4th.—Half-an-hour's drive across the town brought us to the harbour, and then we had a hot walk to the end of the wharf. Such a struggle there was at the slip down to the small boats; four or five boats were trying to land natives, and at the same time as many were trying to take passengers and natives off. It would have been impossible for a single lady. The native police in neighbourhood were of no use. I'd have thought British port authorities would have done something better. We rowed out to the steamer in the middle of harbour, our four rowers bucking in for a place, and scrambled on to the ship's gangway, without any attention from anyone on board. Other boats with native passengers trying to scramble over us required a shove and a heave or two on my part to keep them off. I'd made a great effort to secure berths clearly and distinctly at the British India S. S. Agency, made various expeditions to the agents to see that all was right, but when we got to our cabin some young men were also allotted berths in it. They were most polite, but all the same it was uncomfortable for them and for us to have all their belongings moved.

. . . Four was the hour to sail. Now it is six and no sign of up anchor. But why hurry? There is life enough to study for weeks, the main deck a solid mass of natives, all sitting close as penguins or guillemots, each family party on a tiny portion of deck, with their mats and tins and brass pots beside them, and what a babble! and pungent smell of South Indian humanity.

The sun goes down and Madras resolves itself into a low

coast line, purple against streaks of orange and vermillion : some palms and a few chimney stalks break the level of

houses and lower trees.

The *Renown* lies near us waiting to go for the Prince to convoy him to Rangoon ; its white hull looks green against the orange sunset.

There was nothing but necessity made the old settlers drop anchor here ; a bend of the Silvery Cooum¹ gave them slight protection inland, but there was nothing in the way of roads or shelter. The sandy coast is dead straight. They did not know the qualities of the surf at first. Two experienced men were sent ashore from the

“Globe” in 1611, and were promptly swamped and one nearly drowned ; that was further up this Coromandel coast, when the Company was only beginning to try to find footing here. It was not till 1639 that they bought the land where Madras stands to-day, for the Company. These old fellows coming back to-day from the sea would not see any great change in the appearance of the land ; the trail of smoke going levelly south-west from a tall smoke stalk would be the most conspicuous change.

Two steamers lie near us, just heaving perceptibly, as if breathing before taking the high road. Outside it blows a very little, a warm, damp wind ; there will be a roll in the Bay of Bengal and we will head into it, and the natives’ jollity will change to moans. I should think the ship’s

¹The Cooum is silvery to look at, but it is by its smell that people remember it.



boats in emergency could hold a sixth of them. I hear there are some 2500, the three decks are choked with them fore and aft. Our tiny saloon and cabins are right astern and to port and starboard, and forward of it, are these natives ; we are only separated from them by a board or two with a port-holes in it, and, the difference of fare ! We pay ninety rupees each to Rangoon and they pay one each ; if we open our port we might as well be all together, except that they get the first of the air. Unless we keep the blind pulled, night and day, we are subjected to "their incorrigible stare," which the Portuguese pioneers found so remarkable ; their odour and noise is intolerable. For my *Boy* I've paid twelve rupees, and he has the same deck space as the other natives, that is, barely sufficient room to lie down in. The only deck space we first class passengers have, is above the saloon, where the second class deck is, on the P. & O., a nice enough place if it wasn't overlooked by the natives amidship, and over-smelt by the whole 2500 coolies. Fortunately to-day, the 6th, there's a lovely north-east breeze which takes away some of the monkey-house smell and noise. We count that there are forty natives in each of the two alleyways on either side of our cabins, so eighty rupees (a rupee is 1s. 4d.), less profit to the Company, and we could all have been decently comfortable. But even without moving them, one A.B. told off to keep them quiet would have allowed us to sleep at night.

Sunday morning.—All night, all day, whiffs of pure north-east air, and solid native ; alternating, and all the time rising and falling, shouting, singing, arguing, quarrelling.

Heaven be thanked we have a pleasant enough company among ourselves, and the natives don't intrude more than parts of their bodies into the saloon doors and ports when the squeeze at the outside gets very strong, but they gaze stolidly on us at meals through the ports and doors !

It is pleasant enough on deck this Sunday afternoon under the awning. We have a piano in the middle of the

deck, and a Captain in the East Yorks is playing—he was one of the men who so politely, in fact anxiously, vacated the cabin he found occupied by a married couple; four men play bridge near us, and as we are not a large company we have all got to know each other—the common infliction of the native crowd makes a bond of sympathy.

A young Englishman beside me is overhauling Madras B. A. Exam. papers, and works hard, so that he may have a clear holiday in Burmah. He hands me some of the papers to read, essays on Edwin Harrison's "Life of Ruskin." They are both funny and pathetic; we laughed at the absurd jumble of ideas in some, and felt sorry that natives should have to study the thoughts and sayings of a man, who, after all, did not himself understand the very simple beauties of a Whistler. Then I dropped on an essay, eight pages foolscap, in scholarly handwriting, with perfect grasp of subject, and concentrated, pithy expression. I could with difficulty accept the assurance that it was written by a Madrassee and not by some famous essayist! So, perhaps, if one Eastern can grasp Ruskin's best thoughts it may be worth the effort of trying to teach thousands who can't? Is it not folly, this anglicising of the Indians, Irish, and Scots by the English schoolmaster, who knows as little of Sanscrit as of Erse Scottis or gaelic; calls England an island! and wishes to teach everyone "The ode to a Skylark," "Silas Marner,"¹ and "Tom Browne's Schooldays." (My own dear countrymen you will not be taken in by this chaff for ever, will you?) Why not study Campbells tales in gaelic, or Sir David Lindsay, or the Psalms by Waddell or Barbeurs Bruce.

Just to make the groups on deck complete we ought to have children playing, but there are none with us, their route lies always westwards; they would be a pretty foil to the serious restfulness of the deck scene. Now a lady sings "Douglas tender and true," and sings it so well, we could weep were we not so near port; a group in the stern beside the wheel watches a glorious sunset, which fills the space we

¹ Prescribed by Indian university curriculum.

sit in under the awning with a dull red and across the light a missionary paces, aloof and alone ; a melancholy stooping silhouette against the glorious afterglow—to and fro—to and fro—a lanky, long-haired youth, his hands behind his back, looking into his particular future, a life devoted to convert the gracious, charitable followers of Gautauma Buddha to—his reading of Christ's simple teaching.

CHAPTER XXIV

RANGOON GYMKHANA



JANUARY 7th.—We danced—I danced with ladies in Gainsborough hats, their feathers tickling my eye, in pork pie hats, and Watteaus, and picture hats like sparrows nests ; and there were little dumpy ladies and tall, stately, Junos, i.e., compared with Eastern women. And it was so funny to see men in suits of blue serge, tweeds, or tussore silk, whirling round with ladies in muslins of every lovely colour. If the men had only worn bowlers and smoked cigars, how it would have taken me back to student days in Antwerp at Carnival time, not so jolly of course, but very different

from anything at home. And how stately are the club-rooms—really they are well off these relations of ours “Out East”—don’t believe their groans altogether! it is hot now, they say, but look at the fun they have, especially ladies. There are ladies’ billiard-rooms, card-rooms, music-rooms, reading-rooms inside, and outside, lawns and flowers and attendants to fetch and carry, and swains to admire them, and they have latest dresses, dances, balls, riding, tennis all the time, and Royalties and Viceroys at intervals. Compare this to the humdrum life of our women in Scotland with their brothers and cousins, “A wede awa” to the uttermost ends of the Empire, and never a Viceroy or Royalty of any description to show above their level horizon—that is intolerable.

Then home to dinner, very full of interest and wonder at the sights of the day, and scribbled the above dance scene, and dressed and walked over the way in the soft dust in the soft moonlight and dined with friends and relations, and talked in the dark teak-wood bungalow of other friends and relations and home things, and looked at curios and sketches; and little lizards looked out at us from the walls, and a huge piebald fellow up in the shadows of the wooden roof, a foot and a half long if an inch, a *Chuck-Tu*, didn’t frighten our hosts in the least! Then across the strip of moonlit, to sleep my lone, under the hospitable teak roof-trees of “a Binning!”

Here there seems to be a hiatus in these notes of mine—it is rather a jump from the British India steamer to a Gymkhana dance? But such a break gives relief to the mind, and has sometimes even a dramatic effect. I have twice observed such breaks in journals; the first in Edinburgh, in the journal of the City Clerk. The break occurs when the Provost and Clerk lay cold on Flodden Field, and the entries are taken up in a new hand with a minute which begins—“Owing to a rumour of a disaster in the south.” The second break, I saw the other day in the Madras records. It occurred when

the French called at Fort George in 1746. The break in my journal is simply the result of yesterday being so full of interest that I did not write up till this forenoon, after a pause for rest and refreshment.

So to hark back. The landing at Rangoon and coming up the river was the best part of the journey from Madras. For descriptions of coming up the Rangoon river see other writers. G. and I had been kept awake for several nights by the natives¹ and finally had to shut our port and snatched an hour or two of sleep without air so as to be without noise,—this after various expeditions to try and quiet the beasts outside, but nothing but drowning would have stopped their horrid exuberance.

The peace that you feel in Iona seemed to lie over the country as we came up the Rangoon river.

The Golden Pagoda stands up very simply and beautifully above the flat country, and beneath it palms and ship's masts look very lowly things indeed. It seems a perfect conductor of thought from earth to sky; the gentle concave curves of its sides are more natural lines of repose than those of our challenging spires. I had been prepared for little—pictures and photographs have dwarfed the thing—they do not give the firmness and delicacy in form and the sentiment that it inspires. It is like the Burmans religion; there's a sense of happiness in the way its wide gold base amongst nestling green palms and foliage of trees gradually contracts till the point rises quietly against the blue and fleecy clouds, where the glint of gold and flash from jewels seems to unite heaven and earth.

The spire is 372 feet, two feet higher than St Paul's, but the terrace from which it rises is 166 feet from the level of the ground, and as lower Burmah is very flat, it is visible twenty-two miles from Rangoon.

It was unmitigatedly hot when we got from the

¹ Native in Burmah stands for native of India, not a Burman.

tender to the wharf. Relatives who met us said it was their hottest weather, so we hugged the shade. But this was unseasonable, it ought to be fairly cool at the time of year. We drove in gharries a mile or two to the bungalow, through crowds of *natives* of India—how ugly they look compared with the Burmese! Though why one should compare them at all is beyond reason, for the Burman is to an Indian as a Frenchman to a Hottentot.

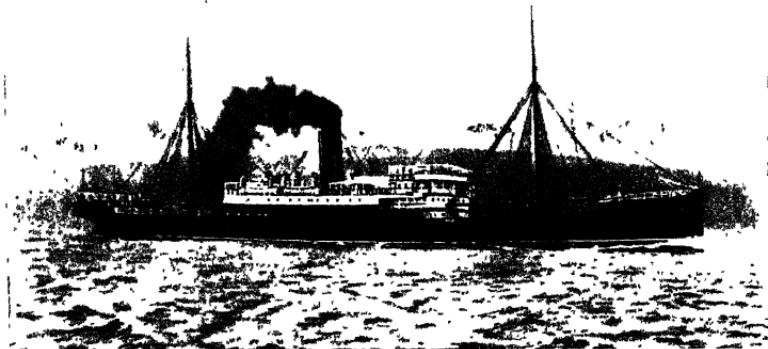
After dividing ourselves and baggage between two bungalows on either side of Tank Road, we drove with Mrs E. to see the lake and her favourite views of the Pagoda; and—I was about to contradict myself! Have I not said India was the most perfectly fascinating country for picturesque scenes of people and streets, and trees and parks and colour! Now, I withdraw; for Burmah puts India quite in the shade!

So you, my artist friends, who have no Academical leanings (you are few), come here, right away, though you have to work your passage on a B.I., or have even to travel first on that line as we did! You can come direct by the Henderson line for £36, sailing from Glasgow or Liverpool—£36 for a month on the blue sea, on a comfortable ship with lots of deck-room. This line gives specially reduced fares for *bona-fide* missionaries, so artists *should* be taken free—over page is one of their liners.

In Madras I saw Mr Talbot Kellie's book on Burmah and thought Burmah had been “done,” and it was futile for other artists to try to paint anything new there. But thanks be, we are each given our own way of seeing things, though perhaps not the same patience to put them down; so when I saw the wide stairs and the arcades up to the Pagoda, and the terrace or platform from which it rises, it was new as could be to me, and as if it had never been painted or described before.

Here follow notes I see about painting—much talk and little done, owing to the novelty and variety of

sights, and the relaxing damp warmth of the climate. The mean temperature yesterday was 90° with damp air



and a stuffy, thunderous feeling and the dust hanging in the air under bilious looking clouds, which made people talk of earthquakes—we perspire, we melt—we run away in rivers, and our own particular temperature is 100°. How annoying to feel unfit to paint when there is so much to do at hand. . . . Started fairly early this morning for the Pagoda, and sat outside it in a gharry pulled up opposite the entrance porch and steps. It takes courage to attempt to sketch such a scene of shifting beauty! These architectural details, carvings in gold and colour, ought to be ground at till the whole is got by heart—then brush and colour let go, with a prayer to the saints.

The “gharry” makes an excellent perambulating studio—it is a small, high, wooden cab, with little lattice shutters instead of glass which pull up all round so that you can let down those you need for view, aft or forward, or at either side, and pull up the others and thus have privacy and light and air, and you need no stove or hot pipes, for you could roast a partridge inside!

A “native” policeman (“a native,” be it clearly under-



stood, in Burmah stands for a native of India) hovered round as if he thought my stopping in mid-street opposite the Pagoda porch might be his affair, but my Boy explained on this occasion that I was a "Collector," why, I do not know ; however it had the desired effect, but it seemed to me rather a drop from his usual title of Chief Justice to a mere Collector.

It grew so hot ! and then hotter, and the picturesque flower sellers on the eleven white steps outside put their white torch cheroots into their mouths—you could see neither red ash nor smoke in such light—folded their parasols and took their roses and baskets and went up the steps and sat themselves down in the porch in the shade and were as pretty as ever—Tadema's best pictures on the move !

Through the Arabesque wood carvings of the arcade roof, away up the flight of steps, shafts of light came through brown fretted teak-wood and fell on gold or lacquered vermillion pillars and touched the stall-holders and their bright wares in the shadows on either side of the steps, and lit up groups of figures that went slowly up and down the irregular steep stairs, their sandals in one hand and cheroot in the other. Some carried flowers and dainty tokens in coloured papers, others little bundles of gold leaf, or small bundles of red and yellow twisted candles to burn. Their clothes were of silks and white linen, the colours of sweet peas in sun and in shadow, and the air was scented with incense and roses and the very mild tobacco in the white cheroots.

It was hot in the gharry !

To my surprise an English Buddhist lady I know, pulled up in front of me and got out of her carriage with a large paint box, took off her very neat brown shoes at the foot of the steps and went up in brown open-work stocking soles, and began to paint higher up the flights of steps, and a little crowd of polite Burman children gathered behind her. And a Britisher, a Scot, I think, came down, a

little dazed-looking and delighted, and melting, and spoke to me, a stranger, out of sheer wonder and *per fervidum* at the charm of colour, and of course we agreed that it all “beggared description.” I must have seen people of many races and religions going up the steps, Chinese, Shans, Kachins, Mohammedans, Hindoos, Americans, French, and British. I think in the space of two or three hours one of almost every nation must go up; not that there is any crowd at all, but the people are wonderfully varied, the greater number being, of course, exquisitely clothed Burmese.

To lunch at 10 o'clock, which is considered late here, in my bachelor friends' quarters—poor bachelors so far from home and home comforts! *Figurez-vous*, a princely hall, princely bedrooms, splendid teak floors and walls hung with many trophies, heads of tiger, of buffalo, sambhur, gaur, tsine boar, etc., etc., and in the long dining-room a sideboard gleaming with silver, white damask, white roses, and red lilies, perfect waiters and a perfect chef behind the scene—upstairs, verandahs spread with lounges and long chairs, tables with latest papers and latest books, and if this is not enough, they have every sort of social function within arm's length.—They are not to be only pitied, for all their punkahs, and the damp heat.

Rangoon, 8th January.—The Shan Camp.

To this we were invited by Mr. B. S. Carey, C.I.E. He dined with us at the E.'s bungalow and told us much of interest of the people he had brought from these states that lie between Burmah and China. As Acting-Superintendent in place of Sir George Scott,¹ he has brought these people's representatives to meet their Royal Highnesses The Prince and Princess of Wales. Mr Carey's brother, and Mr Fielding Hall were also at dinner, and my bachelor host A. Binning, so between these people and G.'s host and hostess, Mr and Mrs E.,

¹ Author of “The Burman, his Life and Notions—a delightful description of Burmah, Shway Yoe.”

information about Burmah and its dependencies, its social, commercial, or political prospects was available at first hand and to any extent.

But to the Shan Camp, in our best array, the ladies in toilets most pleasing to Western ladies, if not to Shan Princesses—we drove a mile or so into the country, turned off the high road by a new cutting into the jungle, and came on a clearing of perhaps two acres surrounded by bamboos and trees, and in the twinkling of an eye we were transported from European Rangoon to tribal life in jungle land. A village of pretty cane houses had been built, and there were Princes and Princesses, and Chieftains with their followings; I think there were thirteen different tribes represented, and there were twenty times thirteen different costumes. We were presented first to the Chiefs; they were in the most magnificent, shimmering brown silk robes of state, all over gold and precious stones, and had pointed seven-roofed pagoda crowns of gold. There were three Princesses, willowy figures, one in an emerald-green tight-fitting jacket of silk and clinging skirt, and a spray of jewels and flowers in her black hair; she was pretty, by Jove she was, and at anyrate uncommonly capable and shrewd looking. She had come about six hundred miles to see their Royal Highnessess, had ridden three hundred miles to Mr Carey's rendezvous up north-east, missed the party there, rode on here post haste, other two hundred miles, and looked as if another thousand wouldn't turn a hair—said hair was black and glossy and dressed in a top knot, set off with a spray of diamonds and rubies! I think she was considered the great lady of the day, as the country her husband rules is in Chinese territory. The other ladies of the Shan States were also beautifully dressed. Never in my life have I seen such delicate blending of silks and faces and jewellery and flowers. I did not know which was the more interesting, the gorgeousness and fantastic form of the Princes' garments, or the exquisite harmonies and simplicity of shape of the Princesses. The willowy emerald-green

Princess, who came from Fairyland, I am sure, shook hands with us and gave us tea and sugar and cream and a button-hole, heavily scented, likewise a cigar, and if I hadn't had fever and could have spoken her language I'd have been enchanted. But first I should have described the wonderful umbrellas that ornamented the camp. When we got out of our carriage our ladies and ourselves were escorted to the clearing, each by one of these potentates with a liveried servant holding up one of these orange or white and crimson umbrellas over us. The Princesses walked with the ladies and I walked with an elderly Prince, with a jolly and kindly wrinkled face—it felt so very odd to be walking in Western modern garments beside this very old-world costume; his wings touched my shoulder, and the vane of his pagoda-spired crown or hat wagged above my head.

Round the centre of the clearing, in a circle round us, were arranged many retainers in tribal costumes; some of them held golden umbrellas, others silver-mounted swords, spears, crossbows, and flags. The arrangements and effect was so picturesque that it is to be hoped the Prince and Princess will see these people in the same situation.

The various tribes danced each their characteristic dance; there were too many to remember each distinctly. A bamboo instrument¹ with the softest bell-like notes pleased me, and gentle but abrupt gong notes were frequently struck. In some dances the dancers stood close together in rows, hand in hand, and moved their feet and bowed their heads in time to very sad music, which I was told was to represent marriage! Another was full of movement and suggested a war dance, the dancers whirled swords and postured; all the movements were silent and the music low, with only occasional loud notes on gong and hollow bamboo, and so were much in harmony with forest stillness and the shades of jungle round the camp.

¹ Yang lam.

The most extraordinary dress was worn by the Padaung women, a kilt and putties of dark cloth, with round the hips and upper part of kilt, many rings of thin black lacquered cane; round the neck were so many brass curtain-rings of graduated circumference, narrowing from the chest to the ear, and so many of them that the neck had become so elongated that the head either actually was dwarfed or seemed to be so small as to be quite out of proportion to the body. Of course the proud wearer could not move her head in the very least, and wore an expression like that of a hen drinking.

Ten chiefs were present; I wrote down their names, but it is difficult to decipher them now. There was the Sawbwa of Keng-tung, forty days' journey from his capital east and south of Mandalay, and north of Siam; the Sawbwa of Yawnghwe; the Sawbwa of Lawksak; and the Myosa of this state, and the Myosa of that, and their wives. The Princess with the green jacket was Sao Nang Wen Tip, wife of the ruler of the Chinese state Keng-hung, and half-sister of the Sawbwa of Keng-tung; her journey to Rangoon took fifty days; and she is well-known in western China and our Shan States as a states-woman and woman of business. Her neat, small, well-set on head, with pretty face and slightly oblique eyes, one could not forget quickly—it was feline and feminine, and through and through as a *poignarde ecossaise*. Her sister, Sao Nang Tip Htila, was the only lady who rode on an elephant at the Delhi Durbar Procession. She is also known as a clever business woman; at present she rules the state of Keng Khaim during the minority of her son. She lost her jewels in the Hoogley on the road to Delhi Durbar, and thought that as nothing to put against the satisfaction of having “shaken hands with the King-Emperor’s brother,” the Duke of Connaught, the memory of whose graciousness is treasured by the Shans to-day.

. . . G. and I went to the Pagoda and admired. It is the richest colour I’ve seen in the world, and, please

heaven, let me come back. Otherwise Rangoon is not so very interesting ; there are wide macadamised roads in the European parts, with large, two-storied villas in dark-brown teak wood on either side, with handsome trees in their compounds, thousands of nasty raucous crows, and Indian servants everywhere, and a very few Burmans. But the Pagoda is almost purely Burmese ; a group of sinister-looking southern Indian natives sometimes passes up or down the steps in their dirty white draperies, and seem to bring an evil atmosphere with them, and a band of our clean, sturdy red-necked soldiers in khaki may go up, flesh and fire-eating sons of Odin, with fixed glittering bayonets and iron heels clinking on the stone steps—Gautama forgive us !—but they don't break the picture nearly so much as the “natives,” their frank expression is more akin to the Burman's, they have not got the keen hungry look of the Indian ; or the challenging expression of some of our own upper classes.

Who can describe the soft beauty of the Pagoda platform—the sun-lit square at top of the long covered stairway—with its central golden spire supporting the blue vault of sky, surrounded at its base with serene golden Buddhas in little temples of intricate carving, in gilded teak and red lacquer, and coloured glass mosaic, with candles smoking before them and flowers dying. The square is paved, and round the outside against graceful trees and palms are more shrines and more golden-marble Buddhas facing into the square, and some big bells hang on carved beams, and children strike them occasionally with deers' horns, half in play, half as a notice to the good spirits that they and their seniors have been there to worship. They have a very soft, sweet tone, and the crown of the sambhur's horn seems suited to bring it out. On the pavement are some favoured chickens and some children and a dog or two, and here and there devout people in silks, kneeling on the flags with folded hands repeating the precepts of the Perfect Law of Gautama Buddha.

To overcome hatred with love, to subdue anger, to control the mind, and to be kind to all living things, and to be calm. That this is the greatest happiness, to subdue the selfish thought of I. That it is better to laugh than to weep, better to share than to possess, better to have nothing and be free of care than to have wealth and bend under its burdens.

Such teachings we have at home ; but the Buddhist believes too, what the West forgets, what the old druid Murdoch, before he died, taught to Columba on Iona : That all life in nature is divine, and that there is no death, only change from one form to another. So they reverence trees and flowers and birds and beasts, and each other, and believe that,

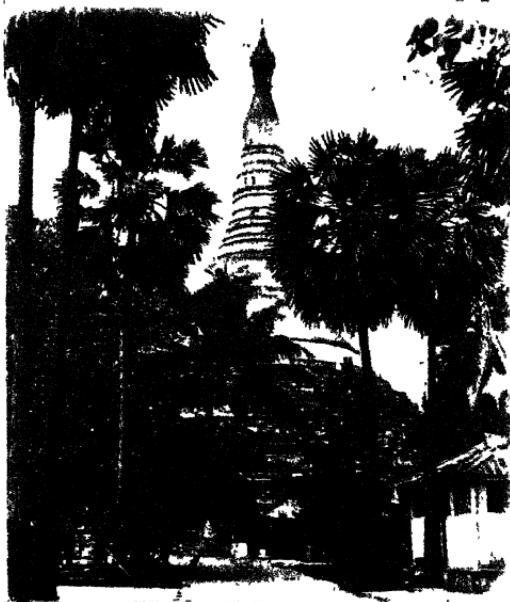
“ He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small.”

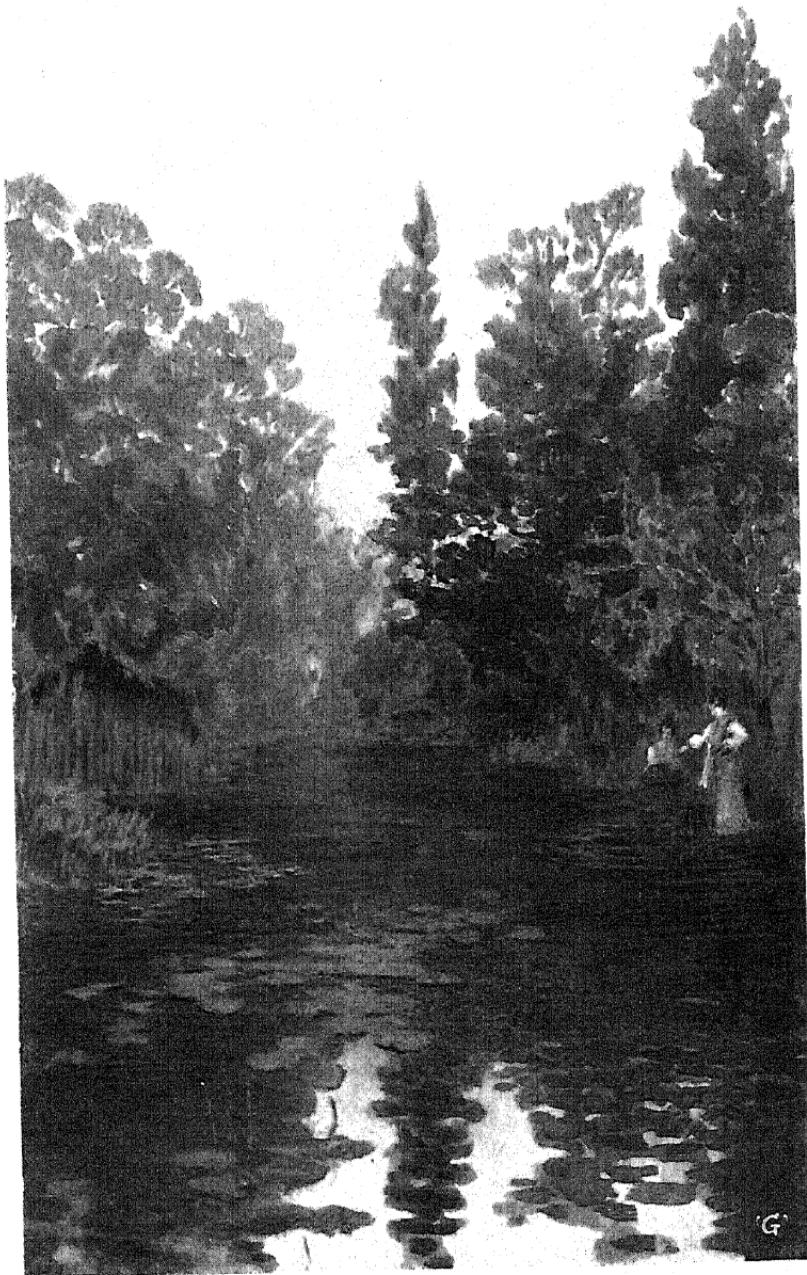
therefore their happiness and calm and the look of peace on the faces of the very old people, and their great kindness to each other and to animals, and the little offerings you see to the spirits of trees.

It is very peaceful, for the repetitions of the worshippers in the open air are not disturbing ; and from far overhead comes a little tinkling from the light *Æolian* bells moved by the breeze high up on the Hte. If you look up you see the Hte against the blue. It is an elaborate piece of metal work on the tip top of the pagoda ; you cannot make out its details but you can see it is made of diminishing hoops with little pendant bells hung from these, that the wind rings sometimes ; and you are told that one little bell may be so bejewelled that it may be worth £70, and the whole Hte that looks so light and delicate is really of heavy golden hoops encrusted with jewels ; for which a king of Upper Burmah gave £27,000, and the Burmese people £20,000 more in voluntary subscriptions and labour. This was since our occupation of Lower Burmah.

The priests in their yellow robes, draped like Roman Togas, come and go just like other people ; they are

greatly revered, they teach all the boys of the nation their faith, reading, writing and simple arithmetic, but they do not proselytise or assume spiritual powers, nor do they act in civil affairs, and they "judge not;" they live, or try to live a good life, and to work out each his own salvation, and you may follow their example if you please, but they won't burn you if you do differently or think differently. . . . If any one wants to have the wrinkles rolled out of his soul—let him go and rest in the quiet, and sun, and simple beauty of the Shwey Dagon Pagoda, with its tapering golden spire and the blue sky above.





'G'

CHAPTER XXV

“ The blairin’ trumpet sounded far,
And horsemen rode weel graith’d for war ”

The Battle of Preston.

THE horsemen were mostly civilians such as two of our friends in these bachelor quarters, and very smart they looked in their neat white uniforms and white helmets with a glitter of gold lace. Another attraction this for the young man from home ; he may be only in commerce, say in Rice, and yet may be of some official service on high days and holidays, and prance on a charger with a sword like any belted knight. The reason of the stir was, of course, the Prince’s arrival.

Rangoon is all bedecked—*pandals* at every turning—these are triumphal arches with seats inside erected by the Burmese, Chinese, Indians, Parsees, and children of Rangoon. They are all very brilliant and almost as beautiful as boxes of crackers, and through these and the decorated streets for days, have been driven rehearsals of the Prince and Princess’s procession. Only those behind the scenes can compute the work that making these arrangements gave to the already overworked officials in this trying climate. Yesterday they had the last rehearsal, when a young member of the Lieutenant Governor’s staff filled the part of the Prince in the great reception tent or Shamiana. Various city dignitaries were presented to him and made their bows, and to each of them in turn he addressed gracious and suitable words, such as the following to Mr Smith, known in Rangoon for his thriftiness : “ Very pleased indeed to meet you, Mr Smith. Allow me on behalf of my Royal Father, to thank

you, for the very excellent decorations you have made on your house and compound in honour of our visit." And Mr Smith got quite red, for he had not made any at all!

. . . The Prince and Princess came up the river early and landed at a wharf and were led through a narrow canvas tunnel into a wide low tent—so all danger of hats being spoiled by a shower or a squall was avoided, also all spectacular effect. Perhaps it is idiocyncrasy, but I can't help feeling that the crucial point of the Prince's tour was his landing on his foreign possessions, say at Bombay or Rangoon ; that the landing should have been made magnificent and historic. Here was an opportunity just such as there was at Bombay ; all the material at hand for a splendid spectacle, light, water, sky, ships, masts, boats, wharfs, the most beautifully dressed crowds and people of every nationality for background. A fraction of fancy was all that was necessary to have set up the most magnificent composition,—something to go down in the history of the country. But the Prince and Princess were ushered through the canvas alley-way into a dim tent, full of damp exhausted air, hired American chairs, and people in stiff Western clothes, and sat on two high-backed chairs with their backs to the little light and listened to speeches. It was a Royal pageant arranged as we do these things at home by men of T square and double entry, energy and goodwill. What is needed for such shows, in the first place, is a knowledge of historical precedents, and imagination, then organisation and reckless regard for weather, with say an artist, a historian, a general, and a cashier, for working Committee.

There was a beautiful thing in the reception Shamiana, but you had to have your eye lifting to note it. As you entered this tent from the town side, there were on either side three tiers of Burmese ladies sitting one above the other, their faces becomingly powdered with yellowish powder, and their eyebrows strongly pencilled, and they

each had a yellow orchid in their black hair, and their dresses were of silks of infinite variety of tint—primrose, rose, and delicate white—“soft as puff, and puff, of grated orris root” and they glittered with diamonds and emeralds, and each held a silver bowl marvellously embossed, filled with petals of flowers and gold leaf. Their attitudes were studied to their finger tips, and as the Prince and Princess went out they stood and dropped a shower of petals before them.

The arrangements for the procession through the streets were perfect, and the crowds in the streets were great! and best of all were the groups of Burmese country people coming in to town in their bullock carts, the rough dry wood of the wheels and arched sun-bitten covers in such contrast to the family parties tucked up inside, in their short white jackets and skirts and kilts of brightly coloured silks. How happy they are, old and young—you begin to wish you had been born a Burman when you hear their laughter and jollity. But I fear we will soon change all that with our Progress and Law of orderly grab and necessary ugliness. Everyone is on the move but the priests, for they do not take part in worldly affairs.

There was a garden party at Government House in the afternoon. G. and her hosts went. I was told I positively must not go without a frock-coat and top hat, so I stayed at home. It is pretty far East here, so frock-coats and toppers are necessary, at Bombay they are still worn occasionally; there you might have seen Royalty at a garden party actually chatting to men in pith helmets and tussore silks—gone at the knee at that!

In the evening the park and lake were beautifully lit up, and a local shower of rain came, just in time to put out half the lamps on the trees, so there was not too much light, as I am sure there would have been had some not been extinguished; but everyone moaned—said it was “so sad” and “you should have seen it last

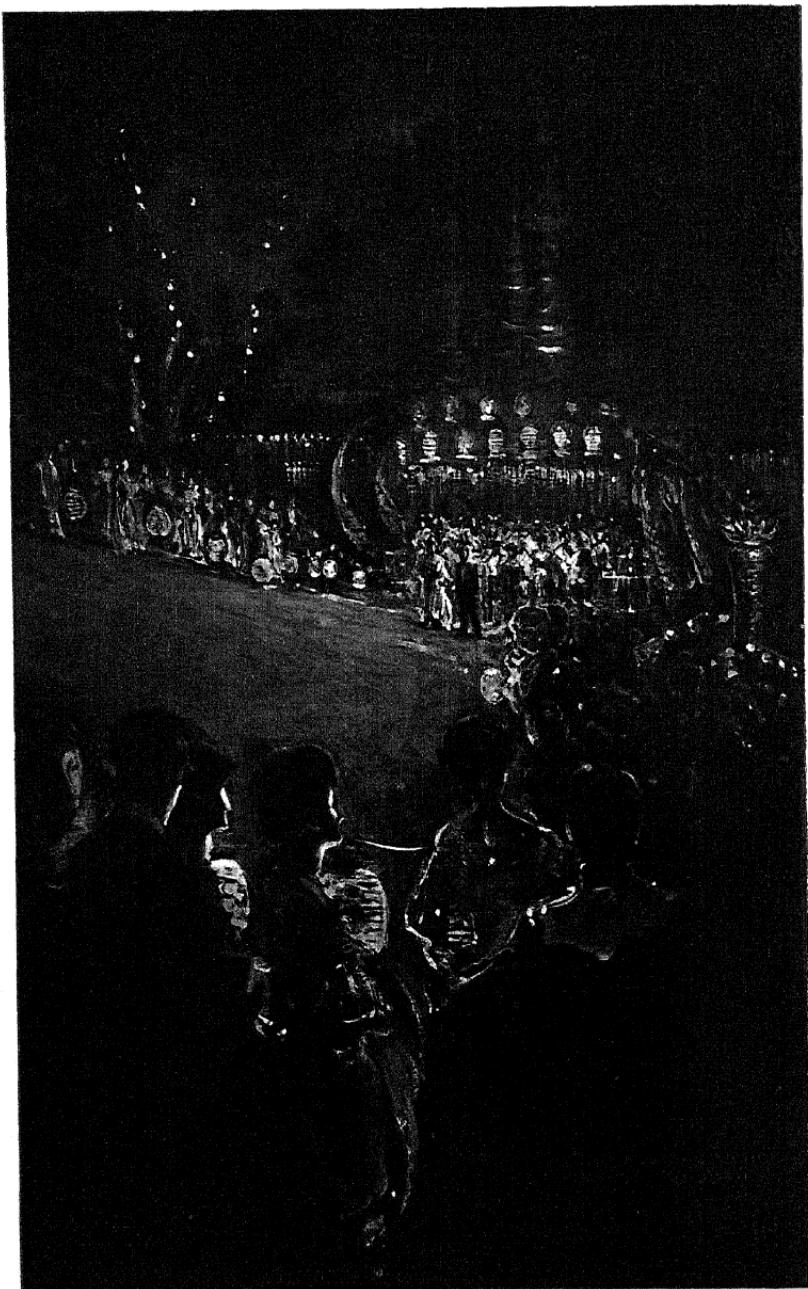
time.'’ There must have been a vast concourse of people. We were in the Boat Club grounds, and it was damp and hot. We waited about the lawn at the water’s edge, and people chatted and smoked away the evening. Everyone seemed very jolly, and to know everybody else, and we were given the names of many people and the letters after their names ; they all had them, but one would need to live in official circles for a long time to learn their meanings.

I thought of Whistler’s “Cremorne Gardens” and his “Valparaiso,” for this was such a night effect as he could have painted, and so I thought of The M’Nab’s saying, “The night is the night if the men were the men.”—someone, a Neish perhaps, may see the connection of ideas here, I admit it is slight.

The Prince and Princess were floated across the calm water of the lake in a fairy galley all over lamps. I made a jotting from recollection, so I will put it in here. It had



three spires and each spire had seven roofs tapering to a Hte, and two great heads of paper geese were at the bow, and hundreds of glowing lamps lit the Royal suite on board. Besides the great state barge there were many boats fancifully decorated with glowing arrangements of



lamps and flowers. The prettiest, I thought, a great water lily with a dainty little Burmese girl in green ("The jewel in the lotus") in its petals, posturing and singing. The heavy white petals in lamplight and rosy lights in the reddish buds and leaves against the dark water were charming, and the Burman in charge, with the usual red strip of cloth round his black hair, brown face, and white jacket, caught a little of the warm light and so blended into the picture. Burmese crews in dug-out war canoes, towed the Royal barge across the lake, and as each canoe crossed the paths of light reflected from the illuminated boats, the figures paddling stood out clearly and were then lost in darkness. They sang in full chorus with a reed piping between each line, liquid quiet music; who was it said—like the sound of grass growing? For a moment the charm was broken by the brass band behind us beginning, but mercifully some one stopped it, and the Royal passengers landed to gentle native music.

Here is, as nearly as possible, in colour, what I remembered of the Prince and Princess landing on the lawn, and neither more nor less, I hope—but one is so apt to put in more from careless habits of accuracy—to count the spokes of the moving wheel.

The words the crews sang were of "Our King Emperor, who is of the lineage of World Emperors (Mandat), and who on the lustrous throne of Britain was crowned." They compare our King to the resplendent Indian sun; "Our King Emperor" begins each stanza with the catch of the stroke, or rather, the dig of the paddle. "Our King Emperor, who enjoys his Imperial pleasures in the golden palace" in London, and with especially distinguished intellectual powers rules over a kingdom whose inhabitants are like the Nimmanarati Gods delighting in self created pleasures. . . . The illustrious Royal couple come from the palace of flowers over distant seas in the *Renown* surrounded on all sides by the blue expanse of wave after

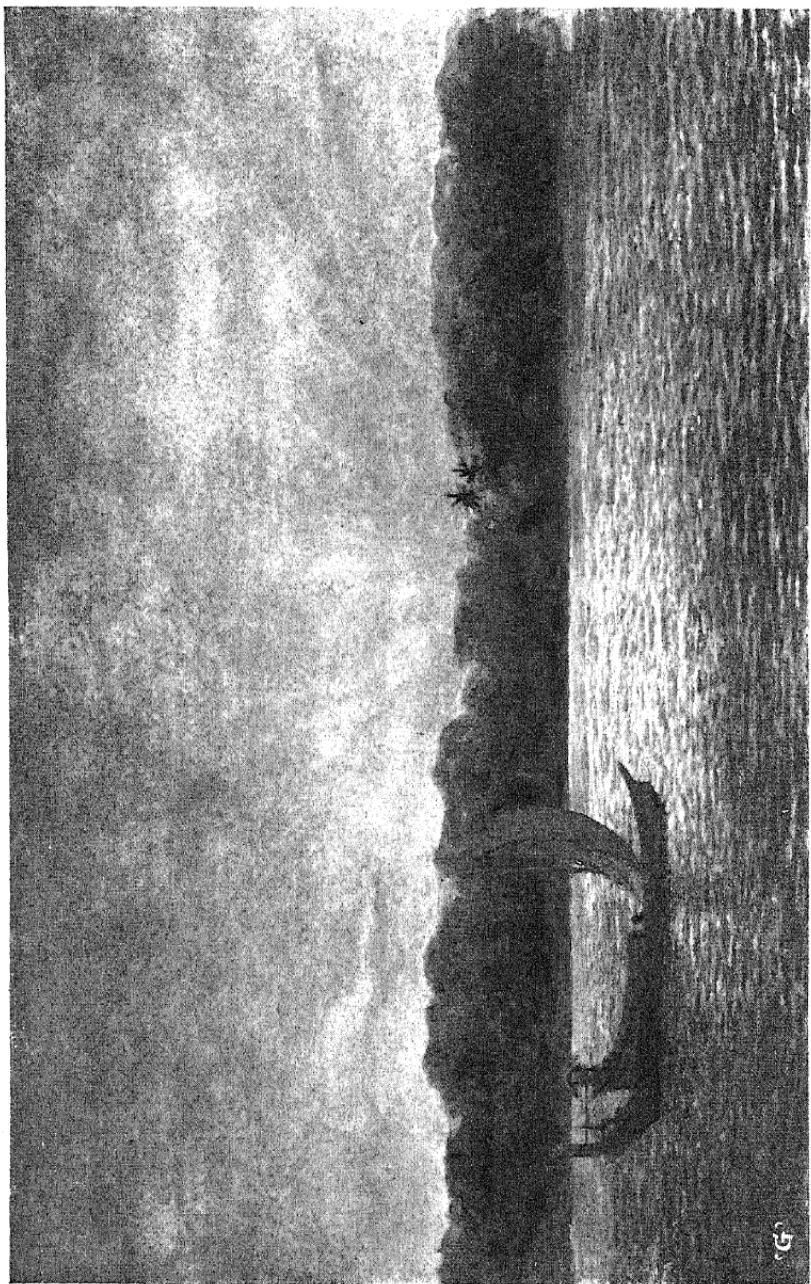
¹ All the Burmese royal residences were and are still covered with gilding. Shwey or gold, is also a Burmese term for royalty.

wave, through the Indian Empire escorted by Guards of honour, and amidst echoes of the Royal salute from the Artillery. . . . For long life extending over a hundred years for our sovereign's heir-apparent and for his Royal consort, the Princess of Wales, who is like a wreath of the much prized Tazin (orchid) flowers on a bed of roses. . . . It is pretty in bits, I think, the blue expanse, wave after wave, and the wreath of Tazin on a bed of roses quite take my fancy.

The illuminations, like the reedy music, went out slowly, and the brass band had its turn and pom-pomed away finely, as the Prince and Princess stood a little, on a knoll under the Club trees, in a glow of hundreds of lamps. Their coming down the winding path from the knoll was picturesque. I've a thumb-nail jotting of it, our people's faces on either side were so enthusiastic, and the Prince looked so pleased and the Princess looked so handsome and queenly, and the cheering—each man seemed to think depended on himself alone. It was really very pretty, the ladies' dresses, and uniforms and many black coats and the lamps on the trees made a gay piece of colour. We do shine on occasions, we people of the Occident, but the Burmese shine all the time.

17th.—Now we are moving on, up the river, by the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. paddle boat, instead of going to Mandalay by train and down by boat as is more customary, this for the reason that all the comfortable bogie carriages are away north with the Prince's following, and night in an old carriage is not to our tastes.

We go south down this Rangoon River a little way, then about sixty miles from the sea, cut across the Delta west by the Bassein Creek, and get into the navigable Irrawaddy, spending a night on the way tied up in the creek at a place where, I am told, we will probably be attacked by a very powerful tribe of mosquitoes, then next day higher up we will, according to Messrs Cook, see mountains again!



CHAPTER XXVI

17TH JANUARY.—On the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's S.S. "Java"—after our British India S.S. experience it is delightful, the quiet utterly soothing. It is hot it is true—hot as in the hot weather they say, but the air is clean on the river.

We are now on the Bassein Creek, twenty-five miles long, going across the Delta west from Rangoon River to the Irrawaddy to steam up it for five days, tying up at night. It is better even than we were told!

This steamer is long, low, and wide decked, with a nice saloon forward on the upper deck, eight cosy cabins on either side, and a promenade in front of them, on the fo'csle head as it were. Aft, divided from us by the pantry and a wire partition, there is a long stretch of deck going right to the stern, all covered by a roof; on this deck sit and lie Burmans, singly or in family groups, in pretty silks, on neat mats and mattresses and pillows with tidy little bundles of luggage beside them.

We do not stop steaming to-night, for we have barely enough of the flood to take us over the shallow midway part of the creek, where the east and west tides meet, so as the sun went below the flat shore and reeds, and it grew dark, the search-light on the lower deck was turned on.

Now we have wonderful theatrical pictures continually changing—bluey-green round pictures framed by the night, first on one bank then on the other, as the light sweeps from side to side, and always down its rays a continuous shower of golden insects seems to come rushing towards us.

In the dark behind the lantern, the deck below is crawling with them. The trees we light up on the banks have the green of lime-lit trees on the stage, and the same cut out appearance. Fantastic boats suddenly appear out of the velvet darkness. They have high sterns elaborately carved, and the red teak wood and the brown bodies of the rowers pushing long oars glow in the halo of soft light; other figures resting on their decks are wrapped up in rose and white and green draperies, and each soft colour is reflected quivering in the ripple from the oars.

By the way, as we slept the Bassein mosquitoes did come on board, and answered their description—they do raise lumps! Horses have to be kept in meat safes on shore, and they say you can tell a man who has lived in the district years afterwards, by the way he slips into a room sideways, and closes the door after him. Two or three bites make a whole limb swell; therefore travellers, bring mosquito curtains if you travel here for pleasure.

18th.—Fresh—cool—sun—and this is a wide river in Fairyland, for the colours of foliage, water, and sky are too delicate and bright for any real country I have ever seen. Where, in reality, do you see at one glance, delicate spires in gold and white rising from green foliage, and dainty bamboo cottages of matting and teak; and women in colours as gay as butterflies, coming from them into the morning sun; and fishermen in hollowed logs with classic stems and sterns, their clothing of the colour of China asters, their faces coppery gold, and their hair black as a raven's wing, drawing nets of rusty red, of the tint of birch twigs in winter, out of muddy water enamelled with cerulean.

Every now and then you meet with an extra big bit of fairyland coming down stream in the shape of a native ship with high crescent stern and a mat house near its low bow; all in various tints of a warm brown teak. The crew stand and row long oars and sing as they swing, and you think of Vikings, Pirates, and Argosies. . . . But down in the

lower deck beside Denny's engines it feels quite homely, as if you were going "doon the water" in sunny June—the engines running as smoothly and quietly as if they were muscles and bones instead of hard steel and 900 H.-P.—engineers, engines, and hull all frae Glasgie, all from banks of old Cleutha.

. . . Now the river widens to nearly a mile, and the tops of ranges of hills appear over the plains. What variety you have in the course of two half days—yesterday amongst crowds and houses and ocean going craft, to-day the calm of the open country with fresh, balmy air, and only river boats. . . . Here comes difficult navigation though the river is so wide; and we ship a pilot who comes off from a spit of sand in a dug-out canoe. . . . We surge round hard aport then astarboard, following the channel, through overfalls and eddies like the Dorris More or Corrie Bhriechan



in good humour, and there are a few sea swallows to keep us in mind of the sea. It is pleasant to hear the rush, and the calm, of tide race, alternating.

We stop at a village on the river side, and there's a

pageant of little boats, a little like Norwegian prams, perhaps sampans is the nearest name for them; they are brightly coloured. The only passenger besides ourselves, Mr Fielding Hall,¹ leaves our steamer here, which we greatly regret; he has told us a little about Burmah, and something of a book he has now in the press, "A Nation at School," and we would very willingly hear more. I gather that its purport is that the Burmans under our rule are really going forward, and that our organisations, hospitals, and factories in Rangoon are proofs of this, though they appear, at the first glance, to be the opposite and that *toute est pour le mieux. . . .*" I am painting now in the cabin he vacated, and ought to be inspired! This Java makes a perfect yacht—granted a cabin apiece—but even with two in a cabin it is very A.I.

The colouring and sandbanks this first day are undoubtedly suggestive of the Nile, but the Irrawaddy is wider; the sand edge falls in the same kind of chunks; the Nile is silvery and blue, with colourless shadows, here everywhere rainbow tints spread out most delicately, and here instead of Egyptians in floppy robes you have refined people exquisitely dressed. As the river is low, we do not see much beyond the edge of the banks. They are topped with high grass and reeds and low palm ferns, and over these appear cane matting roofs of cottages and fine trees.

Paints feel poor things, and a camera can't get these wide effects, at least mine won't—a cinematograph would be the thing. Every five minutes a new river scene unrolls itself. At present, as I look from my large cabin-window, I see a belt of feathery grass, and then the blue sky. A flight of white herons rise, and the sand throws yellow reflected light under their wings; a long, dug-out canoe passes down with a load of colour, red earthenware pots forward, a copper-faced man amidship, in white jacket and Indian-red kilt. He is paddling, behind him are green

¹ The author of "The Soul of a People," an exquisite description of Burmese life.

bananas, and in the stern a lady sits in pink petticoat and white jacket. The clothes of men and women are somewhat similar; the man's coloured "putsoe," or kilt, often of tartan, is tied in a knot in front of his waist, and comes down to the middle of his calf. The woman tucks her longer skirt or "tamaine," above her bosom, as you might hitch a bath-towel, and it falls rather tightly to her ankles, and both men and women wear a loose white cotton jacket, which just comes to their waist, with wide sleeves that come below the waist. The men wear their hair long, tied up with a bright silk scarf, and the women wear theirs coiled on the top of their heads with a white crescent comb in it, and often a bunch of yellow orchids. I've heard Europeans say there is little to distinguish the men from the women in figure or dress: but, to me, their figures and faces seem very prettily distinguished.



We stop the night at Henzada, and dine on deck, shut off from the night by a glass partition. The captain tells us how in 1863 the Company was formed to take over from the Government four river steamers previously used for carrying troops and stores; and how

the fleet has steadily grown with the development of the province until it now consists of 360 vessels, of all sorts and sizes.

Captain Terndrup also tells us of the occupation of Upper Burmah. He brought down the last of the Europeans before we attacked Upper Burmah, and took up the Staff of our army. Government hired these Flotilla ships for the purpose. He also had to do with the beginning of these gold dredgings in Northern tributaries of the Irrawaddy, which are to make mountains of gold !

A new passenger joins here, a Woods and Forest man. He is full of interesting information about both Lower and Upper Burmah, the Mergui Archipelago and natural history.

We are lying one hundred yards off the shore. From the jungle comes the sound of Burmese music: A Pwe is being held—a theatrical entertainment given by someone to someone in particular, and to anyone else who likes to attend ; generally, in the open air, they go on a whole moonlight night.

20th February.—Almost afraid to get up—the last two days so full of beautiful scenes—positively fear a surfeit—sounds nonsense but it is true to the letter.

Cool and sunny in the morning, the river violet, and the sun faint yellow through wisps of rising mist. We are coming to a village on the bank, palms and trees behind it, and a white pagoda spire rising from them, and one in gold above the village. The cottage roofs are of shingle, buff-coloured and grey, with a silvery sheen. People are coming down the dried mud-bank and across the sand to meet us, red lacquered trays of fruit and vegetables on their heads, and some with their baggage on their heads—their clothes of most joyous colours—

“ The world is so full of such beautiful things,
I am sure we should all be as happy as kings.”

to quote Robert Louis Stevenson, and so these cheery villagers, with their flowers and pretty garments, seem to

think. Here is one nation in the world that has attained peace if not happiness: that has preserved the happy belief of the Druids and all primitive peoples, of the relationship of the inorganic to the organic, which scientists now accept and divines begin to consider. Mr Fielding Hall¹ said the other evening "their ideal is untenable in a world of strenuous endeavour and capitalism"—they, of course, do not believe in strenuous endeavour or capitalism, and laugh at "work for work's sake." But we have brought the great "law of necessity" to them, and they must come out of their untenable happiness and fall in line with the advance of civilisation, and give up flowers and silks and simple beauty and cultivate smoke stacks. Our occupation of Burmah really does these people good; witness the hospitals in Rangoon, and the veil of soot from its factories!

Within a hundred years I can see a few odd Burmans going about with hair long and some little suggestion of the old times, a red silk tie perhaps, and a low collar. Foolish fellows, with quaint ideas about simplicity of life, fraternity, and jollity, and old world ideals of beauty. They will be called artists, or Bohemians, men without any firm belief in the doctrine of necessity, or of the beauty of work for work's sake; men who, when they get to heaven, will say, "First rate, for any sake don't spoil it—don't make it strenuous at any price!"

• • • • •
 We go ashore, the Captain and I, and Mr Buchanan, the Woods and Forest man. The air is brisk and the sun hot—such a change from Rangoon. We climb the clay steps and walk along the tiny village to the native (Indian) store, to buy a famous headache medicine for G. It is the principal thing they sell. The owner of the store got the recipe from a British Medico, and sells it now all over Burmah, to the tune of 1,300 rupees profit per month—

¹ But see this author's latest book "The Inward Light"—a most exquisite description of what the Burman believes is the teaching of Buddha.

if I may believe my informant ! Burmese suffer a great deal from headaches ; the sun is strong, and they don't wear hats. There were six native clerks occupied with the sale of this nostrum. I deposited my half rupee for six doses—I'd have taken a ton with hope some years ago.

Then Mr B. showed us his teak logs tethered alongside the banks, waiting for high water to take them on their road south. Some logs are said to take nine years to come down from the upper reaches to Rangoon. Then he rode away on a pretty white pony, first asking me to come and stay in the jungle with him, and don't I wish I could. You feel inclined to stop at Henzada for ever, it is so picturesque and fresh, and the walks by the river under the high trees are very pretty, and there's no dustiness or towniness.

I am sorry Mr Buchanan went ; there's much to ask, about what he knew ; of trees and beasts and people, or of the geology of these mountains that are beginning to appear to our left and right : to the west, the southern spine of the Arrakan Mountains, and to the east, the ranges of the Shan Highlands, which divide the Irrawaddy valley from the valley of the Salwin river.¹

I ought to be painting these boats that pass—but there's breakfast-bell—boats my friends, with the colours of Loch Fyne skiffs, as to their sails and woodwork, a little deeper in colour, perhaps, and set off with brighter figures, with here and there a rose pink turban or white jacket. The hulls have a quaint dignity about them, and the carvings on their sterns are as rich as the woodwork in a Belgian cathedral.

Prome. — The sandbanks withdraw, and the wooded ranges of blue hills show more firmly in the background. It is as if we were at the beginning of a very wide Norwegian valley. Fishermen's mat shelters break the

¹ For short concentrated descriptions of Burmah and Shan States, see Holdich's "India."

monotony of some long sandbanks—isolated signs of life, each on its sharply-cast purple shadow; a naked boy and his sister run along the freshly broken edge of a sandbank, and wave to us.

Round bend after bend, each a splendid delight to the eye—till two o'clock we look, and look, loath to leave the deck, though our eyes are sore and appetites keen — then lunch, watching the passing scenes — and Promé.

Looking out of our windows, to our left across the river, the scenery reminds me of loch Suinnart or loch Swene in Argyll: there are knolly hills, with woodcock



scrub, and terns, or sea-swallows, dipping in the current. To the right the shore is flat, then rises steeply to the road on the bundar, above which we see the tops of brown teak bungalows, set amongst rich green trees like planes, and beyond these again, stand grey stemmed teak trees, and over all, the deep blue sky, and the Shwe Sandaw Pagoda spire glittering with gold, with lower spires of marble whiteness.

Pagoda spires are all along the river side every mile or two, but they do not bespeak a population; most of them are in ruins, they are simply built with sun-dried bricks, some are white-washed, others gilt, only the famous pagodas are ever repaired, for a Burman obtains more evident merit by building a new one. To judge by their number, one might think there must be so many people that game could not abound, but this is not the case at all.

We go ashore by the gangways (two broad planks) past Indian coolies and Burmese laden with bales and boxes slung from either end of bamboos balanced across their shoulders, through ramparts of bales and sacks piled on the sand and gravel shore. On either side of the path there are women sitting with snacks of Burmese food to sell to travellers, sugar-cane, sweet cakes, cheroots, soda-water, and ngapi; this is a great Burmese delicacy and has a peculiar smell! It is composed of pounded putrid fish—as unpleasant to us as a lively old Stilton-cheese would be to a Burman.

Up the bank some forty feet we find we are again in the track of the Royal Procession! There are tiny decorations going up amongst the trees. A triumphal arch, quite twenty feet high, is being covered with coloured paper and tinsel, and a line of flags and freshly cut palm leaves leads to the little siding on the line that goes to Rangoon. The place is so pretty that you feel it is a pity that its natural features should be disturbed by ornament however well intentioned.

We go to the pagoda and climb slowly up the steps, for they are high and steep, and at every flight there are exquisite views out over the jungle of trees, palms, and bamboo, and knolly "Argyll hills," and looking up or down the stairs are more pictures; on both sides are double rows of red and gold pillars, supporting an elaborately panelled teak roof, with carvings in teak picked out with gold and colour. Groups of people with sweet expressions,

priests, men, women, and children pass up and down. On the platform there is heat and a feeling of great peace, the subdued chant of one or two people praying, the cluck of a hen, the fragrance of incense, and now and then the deep soft throb of one of the great bells, touched by a passing worshipper with the crown of a stag's horn. There are spaces of intense light, and cool shadows and shrines of glass mosaic, inside them Buddhas in marble or bronze—the bronzes are beautiful pieces of *cire perdu* castings—flowers droop before them, and candles are melting, their flame almost invisible in the sunlight, and two little children play with the guttering wax.

As we come down the stairs we meet khaki-clad Indian soldiers, with high khaki turbans, and indecently thin shanks in blue putties. They do not fit their uniforms or boots, or the surroundings, and only the sergeants seem to feel their rifles less than a burden. They are told off to



posts in the jungle at each stage of the ascent, and we feel our retreat is menaced, but it is only a rehearsal for the Royal Visit to-morrow. Little Prome is all agog ! for

the Prince comes down the river and is to land here and train to Rangoon.

Before we go aboard we walk through the market-place by the side of the river ; it is lit with a yellow sunset from over the river, the umbrellas stand out brown against the sky, and the burning tobacco of the girls white cheroots begins to show red, and the oranges have a very deep colour, the blue smoke hangs in level wisps in the warm dusty air—and you could lean up against the smell of the ngapi. It is in heaps, and of finest quality they say. Here is a jotting from a sketch in colour ; I made also one in line to immortalise the Prome triumphal arch.



There are more than a dozen flags on it now, and you see two natives putting up two lamps ; and the governor, you can imagine—he is training his pair of carriage ponies to stand this unusual display. They go up and down the mile of high road on the bundar in such a lather, one nearly out of its skin with excitement. What would be better than an arch, and would please every one, would be to collect all the Burmese residents in the district in their best dresses, and allow them to group themselves as their artistic minds would suggest ; their grouping and posing

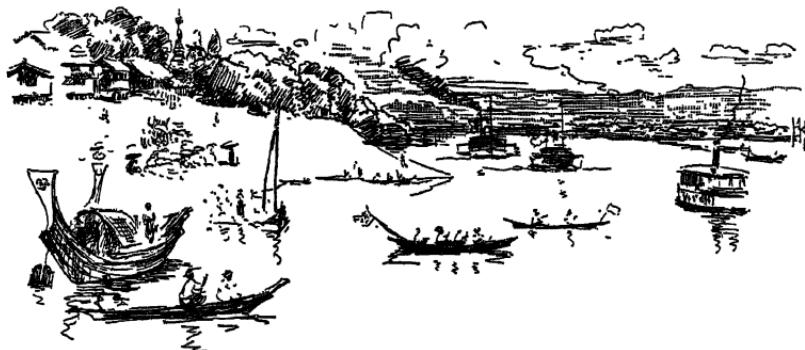
would be something to remember. Burmese woman study movement from childhood, and nothing more beautiful could be conceived than their colour schemes ; I've seen arrangement of colours to-day in dresses, delicate as harmonies in Polar ice, and others rich and strong as the colours of a tropical sunset.

But one line more about the town.—Before the Christian era, Prome was within six miles east of being one of Burmah's many ancient capitals ; it marked the ancient boundary between Ava and Pegu, otherwise Upper and Lower Burmah. It is seventy five miles above Rangoon, and has 27,000 inhabitants, and has streets here, and a law court there, and an Anglican church, so it is moving—one way or the other.

CHAPTER XXVII

THAYET MYO, January 20th.—After leaving Prome we have a good long wait here; we have the Prince's mails on board. Their Royal Highnesses are coming down river from Mandalay, so we wait their steamer. As we lunch on deck we watch the villagers collecting, coming in bullock carts and canoes.

The Flotilla Company have painted their steamer for the Prince all white—given her a buff funnel, and she flies the Royal Standard with the quarterings wrong, as usual, and looks mighty big and fine as she surges south over the silky, mirror-like surface of the river. There is a blaze of sun, and three dug-out canoes, with men in pink and white, flying bannerets, go out to meet her. With their gay colours, the white steamer, and the gleam of brass-work,



you have a subject for a picture after the style of Van Beers—if there was only time! I just make a modest grab at it with an inky pen.

Burmans come streaming along the yellow sandy shore

in rainbow tints, and two of our soldiers in khaki, almost invisible but for the boots and red necks, sweat along the loose sand with them. Up the bank are seated groups of girls and women, quietly filling their souls with the joy of gazing at the white ship that contains the Imperial Ti. . . . Put in the night at Minhla.—After dropping anchor, our new passengers, Mrs Jacobs and daughter, and their guests and ourselves sit round the deck-table and talk of the celebrations in Rangoon, and we all turn in at ten, for we grudge an hour taken off these days of light. They got off at Yenangyat further up the river, a place where there are oil springs and works.

21st.—We get up early these days, because the country is so beautiful, and because it is a little chilly out of the sun, and morning tub begins to have attractions again ; it is so cold and exhilarating, and you feel fifty times more energetic up here than in Rangoon ; you feel you must not miss any of the river's features, so tumble out betimes. Possibly the anchor coming up at daybreak awakened you, and if that did not, a dear little Burmese boy's cock and hen must have done so ; the cock sends out such clarion challenges to all the cocks ashore before daybreak. The boy in green silk kilt with touch of pink, holding his two white pets with their red combs, makes a most fetching piece of colour.

We begin to think thicker clothing would not be amiss—but a quick walk on shore makes one's blood go merrily. We decided to come here again with some sort of a house on a keel of our own, and stop and shoot here and there, and paint ; perhaps drift down river from Bhamo through the defiles, with sport wherever one wanted it—four kinds of deer, elephant, jungle fowl, francolin, snipe, geese, duck, possibly leopard or tiger, and a few miles inland there are rhino and gaur—there's a choice!—and I'd have a net too—four weeks out, by “Henderson” or “Bibby,” four here, and four back—I wonder if my presence could be spared at home.

MIMBU.—Here are splendid trees, like those in Watteau's pictures, on the top of the banks, their foliage drooping over cottages. These are very neatly built on teak-wood legs. You can see into some of them through the bamboo walls and floors, and see touches of rich colour in their brown interiors—ladies in emerald silk and powdered faces, jet black hair and white torch cheroot, and, perhaps, the goodman coming in, in green cloth jacket, pink round his hair, and say, a crushed strawberry *putsoe* down to the middle of his sturdy brown calves.

A number of Burmese get off here. Up the sandy bank are collected about fifty carts. The bullocks in them are finely bred, and are coloured like fallow deer, and look fat and well-cared for. The carts are sand-coloured and sun-bleached, with great thick wheels, and the contrast of the dainty passengers—women and children with neat packages—getting into these is very pleasant. The men busy themselves yoking the oxen; they are dressed in bright silks and cottons, several have M'Phereson tartan *putsoes*. A mother lifts her butterfly-coloured children into the clean straw and gets in herself, and the eldest daughter, with white jacket and prettily-dressed hair, steps in demurely, tucks up her knees in her exquisite plum-coloured silk skirt, and away they go in dust and sun and jollity—verily, I do believe, that Solomon in his very Sunday best was not a patch to one of these daintily dressed figures. . . .

I walk along the country road and have a glimpse of the white and gold of a pagoda, and a glimpse of the river through tree trunks in shadow, and wish the steamer's horn for recall would not sound for many days.

21st January.—Past Mimbu—sands wide and whitey-grey. There are white cirri on blue—sky and sand repeated on the river's surface. At the ends of the sand-spits are waders—oyster catchers I vow—one might be at Arisaig in a splendid June instead of the Irrawaddy in January. . . . Long rafts of teak logs pass us occasionally,

drifting slowly down with the current. The three or four oarsmen, when they see us, run about over the round logs and give a pull here and a pull there at long oars, and try to get the unwieldy length up and down stream ; they wear only a waist cloth, and look so sun-bitten ; there is but one tiny patch of shadow in the middle of their island under a lean-to cottage of matting, with a burgee on a tall bamboo flying over it. Our wash sends their dug-out canoe bobbling alongside their raft, and splashes over and between the logs, and the raftsmen have to bustle to keep their herd together, and we pass, and they go and dream, of—well I don't know what ; that's the worst of being only a visitor in a country—without the language, you can only guess what the people think by their expressions.

We drop anchor off Yenangyaung. There are sandy cliffs here, riddled with holes made by blue rock-pigeons (?)—more shooting going a-begging ! And there is a bungalow on a sandy bluff, and picturesque native craft lie along the sandy shore, altogether rather a sandy place. The oil works don't show from the river very much¹. The Jacobs' party get off here. Mr Jacobs manages this particular source of Burmah's wealth. They go ashore in a smart white launch.

There is the wreck of a river steamer on a sandbank off Yenangyaung, its black ribs lie about like the bones of disintegrated whale ; it is not pleasant to look at. She went on fire, and about 200 Burmans were drowned, and no one would save them, though there were many canoes and people within three hundred yards. A Scotsman could only get one boat's crew to go off, and they saved the captain and others, the rest jumped overboard and were drowned. Burmese are said to be good swimmers, but

¹ Crude oil production of Burmah in 1904—116 million gallons, of which 73 million came from Yenangyaung. In 1902 the Burmese oil fields yielded nearly 55 million gallons, valued at the rate of 250 gallons for a sovereign—Del Mar's "Romantic East."

I have not so far seen a Burman swim more than two or three strokes, though I see hundreds bathing every day. The Chittagong Indians who form our crew swim ashore with a line every time we tie up, and they are about the worst swimmers I have ever seen ; they jump in on all fours and swim like dogs or cattle. In this case of the drowning people, the lookers on would say it was not their affair, just as they would, with the utmost politeness, if you chose to worship in a way different from them ; a *reductio ad absurdum*, from the point of view of those in the water, of a very charming trait. The Burman is naturally brave, but his philosophy is that of the Christian Socialist, it is not his creed to be heroic, or to take life, or thought for the morrow ; and if a man smites him on the cheek, though he may not actually turn the other, he doesn't counter quick enough in our opinion—doesn't know our working creed—" Twice blest is he whose cause is just, but three times blest whose blow's in first ; " so we took his country—and make it pay by the sweat of our brows—poor devils.

We are steaming now north by east, a very winding course, for the water is shallow though the river is wide. At high water season I'd think there must be too much water for appearance sake—it must feel too wide for a river and too narrow for the sea.

We stop at another village. Popa mountain detaches itself from surroundings, thirty or forty miles to the east ; it is faint violet and rises from a slightly undulating wooded plain. It is a great place for game and nats. Most powerful nats or spirits live there, and if you go shooting you get nothing, unless you offer some of your breakfast as a peace-offering to these spirits in the morning. This has been found to be true over and over again by those who have shot there.

The day closes, the Arrakan Mountains far away in the west are violet. The river here is wide as a fine lake and so smooth it reflects the most delicate tints of cloud-

land. In front of us a low promontory stretches out from the east bank ; we have to spend the night there. It is heavily clad with trees, delicate pagoda spires, white and gold, rise from the dark foliage and gleam with warm sunset light against the cool grey sky in the north. Trees and spires, sands, cliffs, cottages, and the canoes with bright-coloured paddlers, are all reflected in the smooth water.

As we get within ten yards of the shore six of our Chittagong crew plunge into the glittering water with a light rope, and are ashore in a minute and are hauling in our wire hawser ; the setting sun striking their wet bodies, makes them almost like ruddy gold, and their black trousers cling to their legs. It seems an elementary way of taking a line ashore ; I think that with a little practise two men in a dinghy would be quicker and would look more seamanlike—but probably it was the way in the Ark, so the custom remains.

The Burmese villagers gather in groups and sit on the top of the bank in the growing dusk. We can just see a suggestion of their gay colours and the gleam of their cheroots. G. and I go ashore and stumble along a deep, sandy road ; on either side are little and big trees with open cottages behind them, made of neatly woven bamboo matting, lit with oil crusies. We come to a pagoda, and tall white griffins at its entrance staring up into the sky, strange, grotesque beasts—the white-wash they are covered with looks violet in the fading light.

At dinner, yarns on the fore-deck, big beetles humming out of the night against our lamp, and the Captain telling us deep-sea yarns—how he signed articles as a cabin boy, and of the times before the annexation of Upper Burmah, when the white man skipper was of necessity something of a diplomatist and a soldier. Some sailors can't spin yarns, but those who can—how well they do it !

As we were at coffee there was a gurgling and groan-

ing came from the people aft, so we took our cigars, and went to see the row, and order restored. There was a little crowd struggling and rolling in a ball, and it turned out there was a long Sikh in the middle of it in grips with a diminutive Chinaman, who might have been a wizened little old woman from his appearance. It was the big Sikh who had done the horrible gurgling ; the silly ass had joined in with several Chinese, professional gamblers, and of course lost, and unlike a Burman or a Chinaman, the native of India can't lose stolidly. He vowed he'd been set on from behind, and had been robbed of fifty-four rupees. The Captain assessed probable loss at two rupees, and the first officer took him down the companion to the lower deck, the Sikh standing two feet higher than the little Scot. Later, the long black man went hunting the shrimp of a Chinaman round the native part of the ship, and caught him again and asked the Captain for justice, and looked at me as he spoke, which made me uncomfortable,

for I could not understand, but guessed he expected the Sahib to stick up for a Sikh against any damn Chinee. I would have liked to photograph the two—they were such a contrast as they sat on their heels beside each other, the wizened little expressionless, beady-eyed Chinaman



man with his thread of a pigtail, and his arm in the grasp of the long Sikh, with black beard and long hair wound untidily round his head.

22nd January.—Another very distinctive charm about this river is that the two sides are generally quite different in character. On one side this morning, the sun is rising over a wilderness of level sandbank, buff-coloured

against the sun, over this there is a low range of distant mountains, with Popa by itself, lonely and pink ; and looking out on the other side from our cabin window we find we are steaming close under steep, sunny banks, overhung with luxuriant foliage.

Where there is a break in the bank we look up sandy corries that come down from hills, clad with park-like trees and scrub—the very place for deer ! There are no inhabitants on the river side, though we pass every mile or two a ruined pagoda spire.

Passing Pagan we see the tops of some of its nine hundred and ninety-nine pagodas. Many of them are different in shape from the bell-shaped type we have seen so far. At breakfast we watch them as we pass. The Flotilla Company does not give an opportunity of landing to see these “Fanes of Pagan,” which is very disappointing. So this ancient city, one of the world’s wonders, is seldom seen by Europeans. There are nine miles of the ruined city ; “as numerous as the Pagodas of Pagan” is, in Burmah, a term for a number that cannot be counted. Mrs Ernest Hart, in “Picturesque Burmah,” describes them in a most interesting chapter. The authorities on Indian architecture, Fergusson, Colonel Yule, and Marco Polo, all agree that they are of the wonders of the world. Mrs Hart compares them in their historical interest to the Pyramids, and in their architecture to the cathedrals of the Middle Ages. She says of Gaudapalin Temple, which is the first temple seen on approaching Pagan, that the central spire, which is 180 feet, recalls Milan Cathedral. It was built about the year 1160 A.D. Colonel Yule says that in these temples “there is an actual sublimity of architectural effect which excites wonder, almost awe, and takes hold of the imagination.” Mr Fergusson is inclined to think this form of fane was derived from Babylonia, and probably reached Burmah, via Thibet, by some route now unknown. They have pointed arches to roof passages.

and halls, and to span doorways and porticoes ; and as no Buddhist arch is known in India, except in the reign of Akbar, and hardly an arch in any Hindoo temple, this disposes of the idea that the Burmese of the eleventh and twelfth centuries derived their architecture from India. There are besides temples and fanes, many solid bell-shaped pagodas of the Shwey Dagon type. The Ananda Temple is the oldest. It is built in the form of a Greek cross, the outer corridors are a hundred feet. The interior, from descriptions I've read, must be splendidly effective and impressive.

We stop at oil works, Yenangyat. The people come on and off in boat loads of bright colours, and women come and sit on the sand beside the ship. Each woman has an assortment of lacquered ware, orange and red, delicately patterned cylindrical boxes, with neatly fitting trays and lids, and bowls, trays, and priests' luncheon baskets—large bowls with trays and smaller bowls inside each other, rising to a point with a cup over the top. This ware is made of finely woven cane, and some of woven horse-hair, alternately coated with a tree varnish, ash, and clay, polished in laths and covered with faintly raised designs and colours between, and brought to a polished surface. The best is so elastic that one side of a tumbler or box can be pressed to meet the other without cracking the colour inlay. They seem to cost a good deal, but when you examine them, the intricacies of the designs of figures and foliage account for the price. The groups of sellers on the shore were interesting, but there was altogether too much orange vermillion for my particular taste—a little of that colour goes far, in nature or art. The women wore rose red tamiens or skirts, and these, plus the red lacquer work and reddish sand, made an effect as hot as if you had swallowed a chili!

After Pagan, the traveller may snatch a rest for wearied eyes. The sandbanks and distance are so level that the

views are less interesting than they were below, but, after all, appearances depend so much on the weather effect. To-day, sky, water, and sand are so alike in colour, that the effect is almost monotonous.

At the next village every one seemed jolly and busy, men and women humping parcels, sacks, and boxes ashore, up the soft, hot sands into bullock-carts. Now, after our lunch and their day's work, the men are coming down the banks to bathe—social, cheery fellows, they all go in together, wading with nothing on but their kilts tucked round their hips, showing the tattooed designs, that all grown Burmans have over their thighs. They give a plunge or two, and soap down, and gleam like copper. Then they put on the dry kilt they have taken out with them, slipping it on as they came out, modestly and neatly. The women pass close by and exchange the day's news, and walk in with their skirts on too, and also change into their dry garments as they come out with equal propriety. No towelling is needed, for the air is so hot and still—but the water is pretty cold—I know!

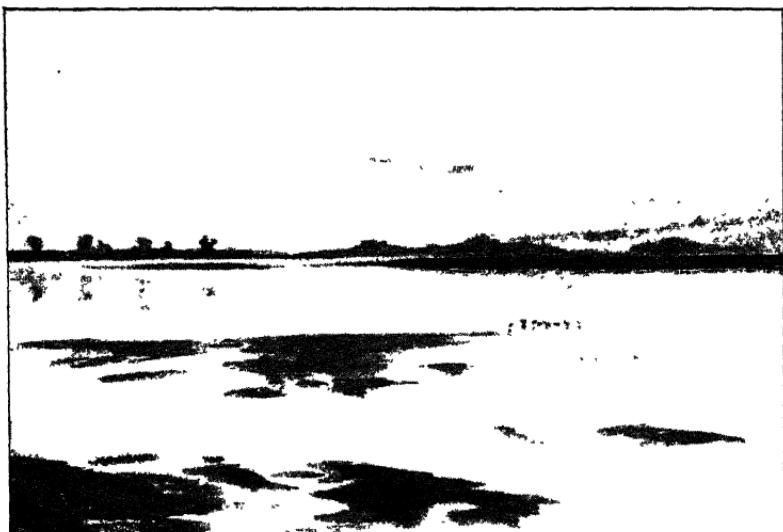
Another entertainment we have at lunch; on a sand-bank a little to our right, a long net; some 200 fathoms, is being drawn ashore, and people in canoes are splashing the water outside and at the ends to keep in the fish. There must be twenty men, boys, and women, working at it; beyond them, there is a rolling distance of woodland, and with solitary Popa in the distance—this mountain begins to grow on one, it is so constantly the view from so many places.

Two new passengers, a Captain in R. A., I think, and his wife, came on board here—came riding out of the greenery and along the shore on two pretty arabs, through the bustling crowd of Burmans and natives.

He tells me he got with another gun, 60 couple of snipe yesterday, which is a little unsettling for me. However, my gun is in Rangoon, and I will leave it there, and hang on to my pencil! I find our fellow passenger, who

is somewhat deaf, is an artist, studied in Paris, and draws little character figures in most excellent style; so he and G. and I draw all day! one encourages the other.

At Myingyan we tie up for the night, and we all go ashore together, that is, Captain Terndrup, G., and I and the artist and his friend and walk on the flat on the top of the sandy banks, and here is the view down the river from where we landed, a yellow and violet sun-



set. Bullock carts go slowly creaking past us; the dust they raise hangs in yellow clouds in the sunset light. There are crops here, a little like potatoes, which suggest partridges. I am told there are quail; some day I must come back to see for myself.¹ There are deer about, for two heads came on board, like our red deer, but with only a brow antler, and a well-curved single switch above that—some fellow sending them to be set up for home? I begin to feel awfully sorry I did not bring

¹ Since return have seen Messrs Colonel Pollock and Thom's book on Sport in Burmah, Upper and Lower, and wish I had read it before going out.

up gun and rifles and fishing tackle, especially as there's any amount of space on board for stowing luggage.

28th January.—The air gets more and more exhilarating as we get North,—there's a Strathspey in the air now in the morning when you waken; but what poor rags we felt only a few days ago down at Rangoon! It is said that men in the Woods and Forests with fever come from the jungle to the river, get on board a Flotilla steamer, and recover immediately.

This is our last day's journey on this boat, but we are to stay on board her to-night at Mandalay, and perhaps to-morrow night, till we get on board the upper river cargo boat, which is slightly smaller than this mail boat. The cargo boats go slower than the mails, for they stop oftener, and tow two flats or barges, one on each side. After Mandalay, Bhamo will be our objective; it is the most northerly British cantonment in Burmah, and is near the Chinese frontier. All the way there trade is carried on at the stopping places between the traders' booths on the flats and the riverside villagers. We expect to find this trade mightily interesting, as we shall see men and women of the wild mountain tribes. I hope to see the Shan sword-makers particularly; they make splendid blades by the light of the moon, for secrecy, I am told, like Ferrara, and also because they can then see the fluctuating colour of the tempering better than in daylight—and perhaps because it is cooler at night!

CHAPTER XXVIII

SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHT miles we have come to-day from the sea, a regular Argo trip, yet we are far from wearied, and, allowed a day to stop here and there, would willingly proceed in the same manner to the Arctic circle. The farther we go, the more are we impressed with the apparent wealth of this country; the soil is fertile to a degree, the climate is better than Egypt; there's coal, oil, minerals, precious stones, gold, marble, alabaster, and such a magnificent waterway. Had I a hundred years to live I'd scrape capital together to put into this recently "acquired" land; as it is perhaps it would be cheaper and better to stay here now, and learn Burmese philosophy, and make capital out of the flowers that blow.

• • • That settles the matter—I get my gun sent up from Rangoon, or go down for it myself—over 200 splendid geese along a sandbank! Within 200 yards! I could count their feathers with my glass. The Captain tells me you just need to drift down in a native canoe and make a bag with ease. Rather a shame, you say; for the Burmans are not supposed to take life, so the geese are not afraid of a dug-out canoe. But a Burman is delighted to eat what others kill, and besides, I have been so often outwitted by geese at home, that I'd just like to have one chance, to retrieve past misfortunes. Between Mandalay and Bhamo, the Captain says, they are even more numerous than here. Beyond Bhamo, he describes the river water as so clear you can count the pebbles thirty feet below its surface, and

¹ Barhead and grey lag geese are the two kinds commonly seen.

describes the whacking big Mahseer, the gold dredging, and the game alongside—peacocks—leopards—buffaloes!

As we were talking, the Rock pilot came alongside in a launch and handed aboard a bunch of geese, the same as those we had seen;¹ he is out of shot and powder, and I believe we have no cartridges on board. The geese weighed five and a half pounds each, but they put on some three pounds before the end of the season, before they go north, possibly to some lake in the Himilayas or Western China, to breed.

At Saigang we fairly draw a breath with astonishment at the beauty of the panorama that opens before us. The river widens to two miles, and comes to us in a grand curve from the north and east. Mandalay is at the bend, some nine miles up. It is like a beautiful lake edged with a thread of sand—a lake that Turner might have dreamed of. Above Saigang on our left are green woods, capped with white and gold minarets, with white stairs and terraces leading up to them. To the north one or two canoes, with bright sails, and distant mountains with purple corries, and fleecy clouds, are mirrored on the tranquil river: these distant hills are of very delicate warm violet tints, on their shoulders we can just make out the forms of forests, and heavy white cumuli hang above them in a hazy blue. The white Saigang pagodas on our left in the distance look like Scottish-baronial or French chateaux, embowered in foliage. Across the swelling river ("swelling" is the right word, I am sure, for the river's surface *seems* to be convex) and to our right the country is flat, and in the green woods are the overgrown ruins of the once splendid city of Ava. Certainly, of my most pleasant recollections, this wide landscape, and all its light tints of mother-of-pearl, will remain one of the most delightful.

Mandalay is at the upper end of this lake-like part of the Irrawaddy; it lies back and behind the river bank or *bunda*, so it is not visible from the river.

Our steamer pulls up against a flat that lies against the

sandy shore, exposed, at this time of year, by the lowness of the river. There are no wharfs as I had expected, only two or three floating sheds, and two or three steamers like our own. The sandy shore slopes up some thirty feet to the bundar, and over that we see palms and trees.

Up and along the sandy shore we drove in a gharry, a man on either side to prevent it upsetting in the ruts, and if it had not been for the honour of the thing I would as soon have walked ! On the top of the bundar we struck a macadamised road and rattled gaily along to see the town. It is almost pure Burmah here, and the native of India is beautifully scarce ; but Chinese abound, and are uncommonly nice-looking people. We drive a mile or so with rather dingy teak and matting houses on trestle legs on either side of the road, overhung with palms and trees, and see the domestic arrangements through open verandahs —women and children winding yellow silk in skeins and cooking, the vivid colours of the silks in sudden contrast to the sombre dusty red and brown wood of the houses.

We stop at a wooden building with gilded pillars in a clear space of dry foot-trodden mud, surrounded with tall palms and some teak trees with grey-green leaves big as plates. The short lower wooden pillars support a gallery, and this again has other gilded pillars supporting one roof above another in most fantastic complication ; green glass balustrades and seven-roofed spires wrought with marvellous intricacies of gilded teak-wood carving. Indian red underlies the gilding, and the weather has left some parts gold and some half gold and red, and other bits weather-worn silvery teak. The pillars and doors from the gallery into the interior shrines were all gold of varying colours of weather stain. Shaven priests, with cotton robes of many shades of orange, draped like Roman senators, moved about quietly ; they had just stopped teaching a class of boys to read from long papyrus leaves—the boys were still there, and seemed to have half possession of the place. Overhead green paroquets screamed, flying to and fro

between carved teak foliage and the green palm tops. The interior of the building was all gilded wood—a marvel of carpentry; there were lofty golden teak tree pillars and gilded door panels with gilded figures in relief, and yellow buff cane mats on the floor. Light only came in through doorways and chinks in the woodwork in long shafts, but such light! golden afternoon sun into a temple of gold, you can imagine the effect when it struck gilding—how it flamed, burned, and lit up remote corners of the shadowy interior with subdued yellows! As we looked in, a kneeling priest near us waved to us to enter, and went on with his devotions, his old wrinkled, kindly, brown face and neck and close cropped head, and deep orange drapery all in half tone against a plaque of vivid lemon yellow gold in sunlight. These priests, or phungyis, in their old gold cotton robes form one of the most distinctive features of Burmese life in town and country. They are greatly respected by the people for their simplicity of life. They teach all the boys in the country reading, writing, and simple arithmetic, and how to try to follow the example of the life of their great Gautama. Theoretically they do this for love alone, or to "earn merit." What alms they receive is not in payment—gifts are accepted but not asked for. The people do not pay taxes for their clergy, nor do these literally free kirk ministers perambulate the country, and ask children for their Saturday pennies for a Sustentation Fund. One of the most interesting sights here is to see their young novitiate priests in the morning going round the bazaars and the boats and the stalls on the strand in their yellow robes, bowl in hand, silently waiting for a dole of boiled rice or fruit, and passing on if it is not quite ready, to come another day.

All Burmese men are priests for a certain time, even though it be but for a few months; for that time they must wear the simple yellow dress and renounce all wordly desires.¹ So it was in the earliest Scottish Church;

¹ For exhaustive and interesting accounts of life and education in the Monastery, see "Picturesque Burmah," by Mrs Ernest Hart.

the Culdee clergy were teachers as well as preachers, and taught arts and crafts as well as their faith.

The observances of the phungyis are almost austere, but the teaching that Gautama Buddha passed to the laity was less so. The Burman says, "Life is a vale of tears, so be happy as possible and make others happy and you will be good"—the religion of the actor and the artist—the rose and to-morrow fade, and "loves sweet manuscript must close," but do what you may, as beautifully as you can—be it a pastel or a matinée.

This monastery is called the Queen's golden Kyoung ; it was erected by Thebaw's queen, Supayalat, in the early eighties—and now king Thebaw and his queen are in durance near Bombay.

Though it was getting late we drove on to another place, the Arrakan Pagoda. We had heard of it pretty much as a Burman coming to Europe might hear of a place called St Peter's.

It was a long, fatiguing, jolting drive in the rattling gharry, fatiguing physically and mentally, for along both sides of the road were such interesting things, Chinese cafés lighting up, huge paper lanterns outside, and stalls of every kind, makers of golden umbrellas and Burmese harness-makers, almost every stall showing some pretty colour and Rembrandtesque lamplight effect.

The entrance was like that of other pagodas, two white griffins looking up at the sky, with busy modern life at their feet. There was a long approach of shallow steps between double rows of red pillars with much wood-carving overhead, and panels of poor fresco ; but it was rather dark to see details, and the stall-holders from either side were departing, and we could see little but the flare of these ladies cheroots. As we got up towards the centre of the temple, a light or two appeared, and worshippers came in from the shadowy outside. As the candle light increased it showed that we were under gilded Italian renaissance arches, and in the centre, where the four

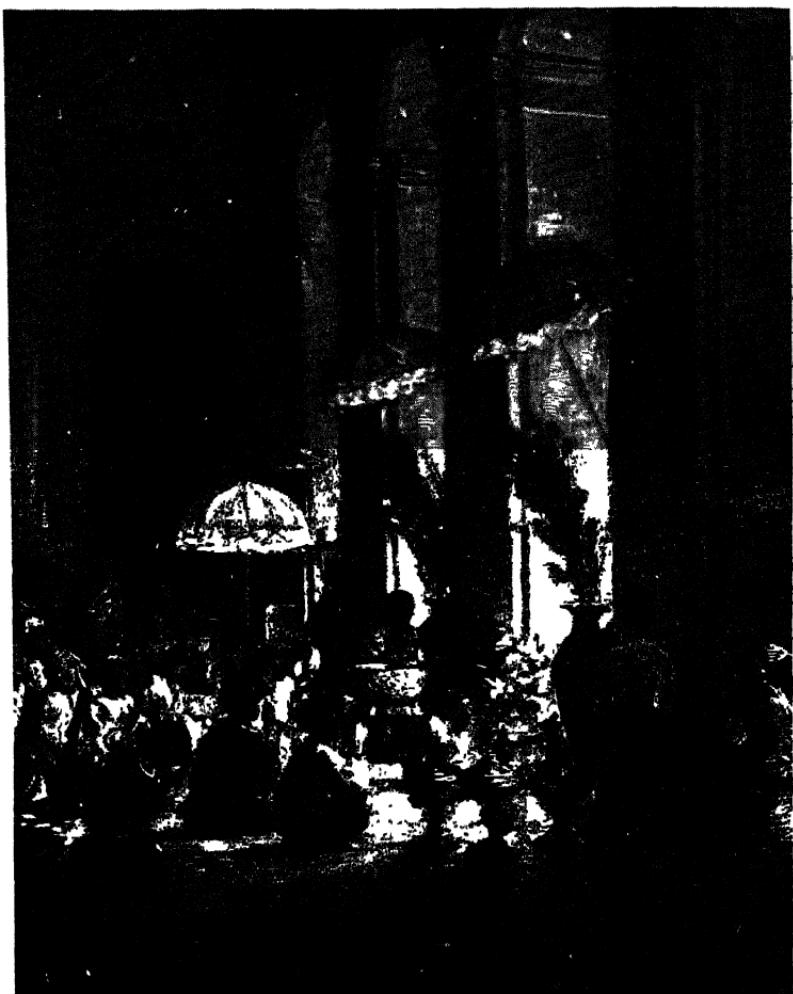
arcades met, were lofty elaborate ornate iron gates round a centre of great light.

Before the gates were curious umbrellas of pink and white silk, and pendant chrystals and ornate vases of china and lacquer with peacocks feathers in them ; and a golden chest and huge silver bowl (full of flower-petals) were in shadow to one side.

More and more candles and hanging glass lamps from green-coloured beams were lit, and gradually worshippers collected and knelt before the great gates facing the strong light with the blue evening shadows behind them. They brought with them strange tokens in shapes like marriage cakes but in brilliant colours, gold, emerald, pink, and vermillion ; these they placed on the pavement in front of them. There were dark-robed people, men and women from somewhere towards China, some of them old and tottering, and Chinese, Burmese, Shans, Kachins, Karens, and people of Asia that I could not place, all kneeling, sitting, and bowing in the warm glow of light that comes from the great golden Buddha behind the gates. Amongst them were golden and red lacquered boxes and bowls and a mélée of effects and things, that suggested a curiosity shop, yet withal a *bigness* in the golden arches and a simplicity of worship that was simply grand. Ghost of Rembrandt !—could you have but seen this and depicted it in your most reverend and inspired moment ! Or Rubens—he would have caught the grandeur of effect, but would he also have caught the meekness and the piety of the old women's and men's faces.

There was a dog and a Chinese boy beside the peacock feathers, in a blue silk shirt and trousers edged with black ; a Burmese woman sweeping ; two little brown half naked children—a boy and girl playing on the stone pavement with the guttering wax of candles at the side of the arches ; and the kneeling youths and seniors bowing and repeating their sonorous prayers, all within a few yards of each other, without one disturbing or apparently distracting the other.

Only I felt out of place, a long standing Western figure from the Western world in topee and flannels with a sketch



book, scribbling: but a boy kindly held half of some worshipper's candle to light my sketch book; priests in yellow robes stood behind looking on, and made no remark.

I fear an Occidental must look uncouth in such an Oriental setting ; you feel you ought at least not to stand up in a place like that ; I mean for æsthetic reasons—you overbalance the composition.

How great and unexpected was the change from the morning on the river in the sun and clear air to the evening and the glow of lamps and colour and the chanted prayers in this centre of Buddhism, the Mecca of this far East !

We came out and caught a tram-car home, *i.e.* to the "Java"—an electric car made in London—Ye gods—the short circuit of ideas !

24th January.—This morning I have to try to paint the groups in the Arrakan Pagoda, but in the bright daylight it is difficult to take one's attention from these Phrynes; who come down to bathe beside our steamer—Phrynes, as to figure I mean. One of the two nearest has a little white jacket and a tight hunting green cloth skirt and black velvet sandals ; her movements are deliberate, almost languid, and she is fairly tall, very well proportioned, and when her white jacket comes off, the colour of her shoulders is very pretty in contrast to the jet black hair and undergarment of blue. This garment, with its white band tight across her bust, remains on when the green kirtle drops to her feet. Her friend is dressed in the same way in different colours. They walk in and swim a few strokes—if you may call it swimming—with other women already in the water. Then they wash themselves very carefully with soap, and when the first comes out in her blue tight garment, she slips the green kirtle over her head and the blue dress drops off underneath it. There is no drying—the sun does that, and they are hardy. A yard or two on this side of them, two men tuck their waist clothes round their hips and go in with their oxen ; both the yellowy-brown men and the oxen seem to enjoy it, and come out with the sun in high lights on their tautened muscles.

Immediately at hand a native (Indian) woman, a Madrassee, with her brass chatty, wades into the water all standing—dirty white canopies and all—and futilely washes, without soap, and rubs her teeth with a finger, spits and makes ugly noises and faces, looking now and then critically at the Burmese women farther up the bank, as if she would fain copy their more graceful ways and movements. Then she polishes her brass chatty religiously with mud, and fills it with water where she has been dabbling, and goes ashore and up the sand, a bedraggled-looking creature, and conceited at that! Next comes a Burmese mother and her two young daughters, their bathing dress a smile and a Christmas orchid in the hair. The eldest is a thing of beauty, with lines to delight a Phidias. Alas! why must we hide all beauty of form except that of animals—hide fearfully God's image? Men, women, and children here all seem fit and fairly well shaped; you rarely see a deformity, except at show places such as the big temples. It would be the same with us were we to pay more attention to form, and proportion, than to dress.

I intended to paint at the Arrakan Pagoda to-day, but a pleasant looking man came on board with a chitsaya harp; I had to try and make a jotting of him. G. and Captain Turndrup brought him. He sat and played tunes for hours—epic tunes, which I'd have given anything to remember. His boat-shaped harp of thirteen strings was tuned in minor thirds, so you could readily pick out Celtic tunes on it. I am told Sir Arthur Sullivan came here and listened to his music and made many notes. The harp belonged to Prince Dabai, Thebaw's step-brother, and I confess I bought it; but I will restore it if it is required for any National Burmese Museum or Palace.

Whilst I painted him, the phungyi boys in yellow robes came along the shore to collect food from the people on the river boats alongside the sand, and from one or two stalls on the shore. They stood silently with the



big black lacquer bowls in, their arms against their waists, looking humbly down, and a stall holder placed large handfuls of the rice she was cooking into a bowl. Then the close-cropped bare-headed lad came to the fifty foot dug-out canoe beside us, but the food there was only being cooked so he moved on without a word.

Half an hour's gharry to the pagoda, an hour there sketching and trying to remember things, and half an hour's rattle back in the dark, wound up my day's study.

The Mandalay gharry, a "dog kennel on wheels," is a frightfully ramshackle thing; doesn't the very name suggest a rickety, rattling sort of a machine? They are



of hard wood, loosely built, with wooden seats, iron tyres, loose wooden blinds, and springs of iron—I doubt if there are any! and it is hauled by a tiny Burmese pony, licked by a native of India.

... 25th.—A faint mist lifting off the shore. The sun is hardly risen, but already the bullock carts with heavy

wooden wheels are squeaking and groaning along the sand. There is just enough mercantile life to be comprehensible and picturesque; some four or five Irrawaddy Flotilla steamers are fast to the bank, and between them are some sixty native canoes with round mat houses on them. The cargoes of the steamers are piled on the sand in bales, so you see the whole process of its being discharged and loaded on the carts and taken away. As the sun rises the dust does the same, and so do the voices of the people, old and young, and the geese and the children join in, but the babel is not unpleasant, it is not too loud; there are pleasant low notes and laughter all the time. The general tone of the voices is not unlike that of a French crowd in good humour.

We have received a kind invitation to go and stay with people on shore, but we resisted the temptation for the meantime. For here on the "Java," we see such interesting scenes; and our up-river boat ought to be here immediately, and to shift our belongings along the shore some thirty yards on to her, will be much less trouble than flitting to our friends' bungalow; so we go on drawing here.

The Phryne in hunting green is down again, languorously dropping her green kirtle. It has an orange vermillion band round the top that clips the green above her breast. She isn't a swell swimmer; all the women do in that way is with their hands and they raise their heels out of the water, and smack down their shins and toes together and just get along, this possibly on account of the tightness of the lungye or tamien. The men have various strokes, mostly sort of dog strokes, and get along but slowly. I have not seen either a man or woman dive.

We have gone up the bank now a few yards to the cargo boat and installed ourselves in it with our luggage—a very easy "flitting"—and we find the cargo steamer just as perfectly comfortable as the mail boat we have

left—cabins, mess table, promenade on the upper deck in the bows. There are curtains round the bows to drop if there is too much draught, and thick handsome carpets on deck. To compare price, comfort, and beauty of scenery with a Nile trip would be hard luck on Old Nile and its steamers. I should say this is a third cheaper and six times more comfortable, and many times more interesting. With regard to mosquitoes there are more at this present moment of writing than I have had the misfortune of meeting elsewhere, but it isn't so all the road. I still think, however, that those mosquitoes of the Bassein Creek are incomparable.

We (that is merely "I" this time) went to-day with a very European party of Mandalay residents up and across the river to Mingun in a sort of large picnic on a Government launch. We went to see the second biggest bell in the world and a pagoda that would have been one of the biggest buildings, if it had ever been finished! Both are great *draws*, and neither is of any account. The view of the winding river from the top of the ruins of the pagoda is certainly exquisite, and for ever to be remembered. But it's a pretty stiff climb to get there, and you should let your enemy go behind, for the loose bricks sometimes go down through the shrubs like bolting rabbits.

The trees too are splendid, and the distant ruby mountains are very exquisite, but as for dancing on a Government boat's deck, and tea and small talk—such things may be had at home, and brass bands too—*mo thruaigh!*

The big bell weighs about ninety tons; it is hung on modern girders, far enough off the ground to let you crawl inside, and it has a poor tone. The diameter of the lip is sixteen feet. The masonry, otherwise the base for the proposed pagoda, contains 8,000,000 cubic feet, is 165 feet high and 230 feet square, and is cracked through the middle and tumbling to pieces owing, some say, to an

earthquake and thunderbolts—I think from bad building and the natural inclination of loose bricks to find their angle of repose.

To-night we gharried to the Grahams to dinner, over the ups and downs and deep sand and ruts of the shore, over cables and round timber heads and teak logs till we got to the hard, a man on each side holding up the conveyance, and two men with lanterns.

There were splendid roses on the dinner-table and strawberries down from the Shan Highlands, as fine as any I have seen. Then after dinner we saw collections of the most recherché Burmese and Chinese art, in which Mr Graham evidently has a very critical taste. There was exquisite silver work and brass, gold, and amber carvings, dahs or swords in silver and velvet sheaths with ivory



handles, long shaped books of papyrus with the heavy black print on lacquered gilded leaves, and Buddhas in gold and marble, and a little Chinese box carved in root amber, which I coveted—it suggested a picture by Monticelli—besides wonders of Burmese carvings in wood

and ivory: then music, and good voices, and the piano sounding so well in the large teak drawing-room—and home again, rattling in the gharry over the hard macadam and the soft ups and downs and ruts along the sand, as here depicted in black and white, to our new quarters on the shores of Mandalay where the big mosquitoes play and sing us to sleep—"only a temporary plague," they say here, and we hope so! G. invented a plan of slaying them. When you are under the net, you can't bang them against the swaying muslin—this plan obviated that difficulty, and is effective, only it needs a candle and matches inside the net, and might, at any moment, set the ship and Mandalay in a blaze: I mentioned this dire possibility, and G. said she would not do it if I were not near!

26th, Friday.—Still aboard the S.S. "Mandalay," turned out bright and early—a delicious morning, dew lying on the short grass above the shore. Went to the bazaar with



my native boy—wish I had a Burmese servant, as neither of us can speak a word of Burmese. I'd advise any tourist to try and get a Burmese servant for guide and councillor. It is horrid being tongue-tied amongst such kindly-looking

people. There does not seem to be much love lost between the Burmans and the natives of India, and I think the foolish Indian natives actually fancy themselves superior!

I have never seen, no, not in India, so much paintable "stuff" in so small a space. The stalls were sheltered by tall umbrellas made of sun-bleached sacks, over them the blue sky, and under them masses of colour in light and shade, heaps of oranges, green bananas, red chillies, and the girls and women sitting selling them, puffing blue smoke from white cheroots big as Roman candles, or moving about from shade to light like the brightest of flowers, no hurry, no bustle; a chatter of happy voices, nothing raucous in sound or colour, and all the faces good and kind to look at, except when a foxy Indian came across the scene. There is also near this open-air bazaar an immense market under cover. The light is not so picturesque in it, but the women are of a better class. There's much colour at the stalls where they sell silks, and talk to the passer-by, and brush their black hair, and powder their faces between times. If you could talk to them it would be fun, for they are as jolly and witty as can be. I understand Burmese girls of almost all families keep stalls at the bazaars when they "come out," which accounts for the Burmese women's great intelligence in business affairs.

Then to the Arrakan Pagoda, and felt inclined to stay all day listening to the sonorous recitations of the kneeling people.

Back in a tram-car, an excellent place to sketch faces, your topee over your eyes, and sketch book behind a newspaper—no one knows you are drawing. The following tram-car notes are of Burmese faces, except the face behind, with a look of cankered care on it; he is some kind of an Indian.

After lunch to the palace—a longish drive inland from the river. Thebaw not at home, and Supayalat out too, so we called on the Britishers, resting on long deck chairs in the golden rooms now used as a club. What a rude contrast

Western chairs and tables and newspapers were to the surroundings! I believe Lord Curzon has arranged that this æsthetic immorality shall be put right, and a proper place appointed for the Club, and Divine service.



I'd like to have been here at the looting of this particular palace, you hear such fascinating descriptions of Thebaw's barrels of jewels—emeralds and rubies to be had by the handful. How angry the soldier man is when you speak of it. He will explain to you, with the deepest feeling, that military men were put on their parole not to bag anything, and they did not; but the men in the Civils came on ponies, and went away with carts.

The palace grounds are surrounded by four crenellated walls, each a mile long; each wall has three seven-roofed gates in it, and each gate has a bridge across the wide moat. The palace rooms are nearly splendid; they are supported on many teak pillars, low at the sides of the rooms, and up to sixty feet in the middle. These are all gilt, and show "architectural refinements," for the teak trees they are made of are not absolutely straight, and they

have an entasis that is quite natural where they taper away into the golden gloom of the sloping timber roofs. The rooms are lofty, and all on one floor, because the Burmese do not like to live in rooms with people above. There are infinite intricacies of gilded teak carving, and some rooms glitter like herring shoals with silvery glass mosaics and mirrors and crystals. How delightful it must have been to see these courts, and gardens, and palaces, and throne-rooms in their full brilliancy before our "occupation," but I suppose one would have had to crawl on all fours or lose one's head at the nod of Supayalat. She and Thebaw and their parents were very much in-bred, and, though she was otherwise particularly charming, she had a strongly-developed homicidal mania. However, the people wept when they saw their king and queen being so unexpectedly hurried away in a gharry to go "Doon the Water" in Denny's steamer, in November 1885. They had far more fun, they say, before we came; a rupee went farther, and so on; and I quite believe it—we did not grab the country to amuse them!

27th.—Painted till 2 from 8 in half-hearted way. To the Grahams, then to the Arrakan Pagoda again, too tired and mosquito-bitten to do much after getting there—a nostalgia of colour these last few days—but saw the golden Buddha. The florid iron gates were open, and an immense light shone on the seated and kneeling worshippers in front. It is the most effective scene in the world for the amount of staging. A glare of golden light from unseen lamps—electric, I believe—gleams all over the calm golden figure. It is raised so that the arch in front just allows you to see up to the top of the statue; it is over twelve feet high, and the base is about six feet off the ground.

I must come back; on this journey I have already seen so much on the way here—some day I will come out direct and paint this one scene, and perhaps one or two in the Shwey Dagon Pagoda—"if I'm spaired," as they say in the lowlands, instead of knocking under the table.

. . . On board to-night; Burmans and natives are making up their booths and stalls on the flats alongside, and on the after-decks of this boat, so there is a good deal of hammering during dinner-time. Afterwards we sit round the table on the fore-deck and tolerate the mosquitoes, and tell yarns, and I turn in with a picture in my mind, from a story of the captain's, of an East African coast, and a tramp steamer on a bar, the surf coming over her stern, and the shore lined with drunk niggers, and green boxes of square-faced Dutch gin—at four shillings and sixpence the dozen, box included.

CHAPTER XXIX

“Away to Bhamo,
Then fare ye well
You Mandalay girl
We're away—
To the Bhamo Strand.”

New verse to old Chantie.

SUNDAY, 28TH.—The steamer blows a second time, and the friends and relations of our traders, sisters, cousins, and aunts get ashore across the flat or barge alongside, and the crowd of gharries, ox-carts, and fruit and food sellers begins



to disperse up the sandbank. I see the tall beauty in green kirtle get a friend to raise her flat basket of oranges on plaintain leaves on to her head, a slow elegant movement she may have learned in dancing. Here, when the women

dance, there is little movement of the feet, but the angular movements of the body, arms, and hands and fingers are very subtle and studied, and are done very slowly; they have time!—in fact, they have to look forward to so many re-incarnations before they even become men, that they must feel entirely superior to Time!

We had a quieter night, leastwise quieter than we expected. A child cried, and a Burman built his booth a little aft of our cabin, with box lids and French nails, and the hammering went on till about two. Then all was quiet, and traders and passengers and their families were asleep, stretched round the deck aft of our portion—Burmans, Phunghis, Shans, Karens, Chinese, Sikhs, wrapped in various coloured sheets, in lines fore and aft and from side to side, dimly lit from above by lamps—the same in the two decks of the flat which we are to take up the river with us alongside.

These cargo steamers usually take up two flats,¹ one on each side, and the amount of trade done on these each voyage up and down, I am told, is considerable, and must annually give great profit to the countries whose goods we carry; two-thirds of these goods are Continental—German, Swiss, Austrian, Italian, and some are Japanese. The deduction to be drawn from this will be equally clear to Protectionist or Free Trader.

We made a false start; the mail steamer from the south we had been waiting for appeared just as we had cleared off the shore. She had been delayed by fog, so we anchored for an hour or so to tranship the mails and Burmese passengers. Meantime I took a spell of painting, then Krishna and I hunted up a bamboo, got out snake-rings, fishing book, and reel, and had a rod fixed up in no time. What with gun, cartridges,² and painting things, my cabin looks quite interesting—to my mind. We have but one

¹ I am told this steamer is 250 feet, beam 48, flats 96, beam 24, and the mail steamer was 325, beam 62.

² Telephered to Cook, Rangoon, who sent them to Mandalay by train.

other passenger, so we may utilise two cabins, one as sleeping-room, the other as sitting-room, gun-room, and studio combined. As such it might be even bigger with advantage, but for situation it would be impossible to beat—for changing views from the window or swirling tide and passing boats with people in them, like bunches of flowers flaring in the sun, and then all soft and delicate as they float past in our shadow. The priests in these boats, with their yellow robes and round palm leaf fans have a decorative effect of repetition, and we are told these fans keep their thoughts from wandering from righteousness to pretty girls. Palm leaves, robes, and their bare right shoulders and arms are all in harmonious browns and yellows ; the water is bluish mother-of-pearl. The men row their boats as all Southerners do, Italians, and the rest, standing and backing them like gondolas ; only the Burman uses two oars.

But to the fishing rod and line ; we started with bait and did underhand casting from lower deck up and down the ship's side. The rod was excellent, a split new cane, if not exactly the "Hardy split," and it did not lie wholly between two points—it meandered a little, but I've got salmon on worse. We got nothing, and yet I saw a Burman in a dug-out log, with a no whit better rod, pull up a beauty like a sea trout of two pounds, as he drifted past ; so next stopping place I hope you will hear of fish "grassed" or "creeled," as they say in the papers.

We pass Mingun, half-an-hour up the river from Mandalay. I've mentioned this place before and its bell. The bell is big, so the traveller is expected to make every effort to see it. To me, the size of a bell is not very interesting, and one heap of stone (pyramids included) seems as interesting as another. It's the design that counts.

The Flotilla steamer does not always stop at Mingun ; we went steaming past it on our left. The reflections of the trees and ruin in the smoothly running stream were crossed by rippling bands of lavender, where a breeze touched the

water: and sea swallows poised and dipped, screaming and flashing after each other. On the far side of the river



were level white sands, green sward, and distant blue mountains.

There's a pleasant sense of swelling fullness about the river; it may be an optical delusion, but I am inclined to believe it is a fact that the surface is slightly convex, like an old-fashioned mirror, perhaps an inch or two higher in the middle than at the sides. There is not much depth to spare, already we have touched bottom. It was a curious and almost incredible statement made to me that we draw four and a half feet, and can go over sand bars only covered four feet. It is true, however; the steamer after touching is backed astern a yard or two, and when her own following swell comes up to her, she goes ahead over the bar, on the swell.

At lunch we pass a great number of geese on the edge of a sandbank—our table is right in the bows, and we have a clear view of the banks on either side as we go along, even at meal times we have the field-glasses handy to pry into the scenes of animal life on river side—the

captain, who generally has his gun handy, said, "Yes, certainly we must have a shot at them," and for a moment I hoped he would drop anchor, and that we would go off in a boat and stalk them, but I gathered sadly the "shot" was to be underway at 150 yards—and I'd rather not—another lost opportunity!

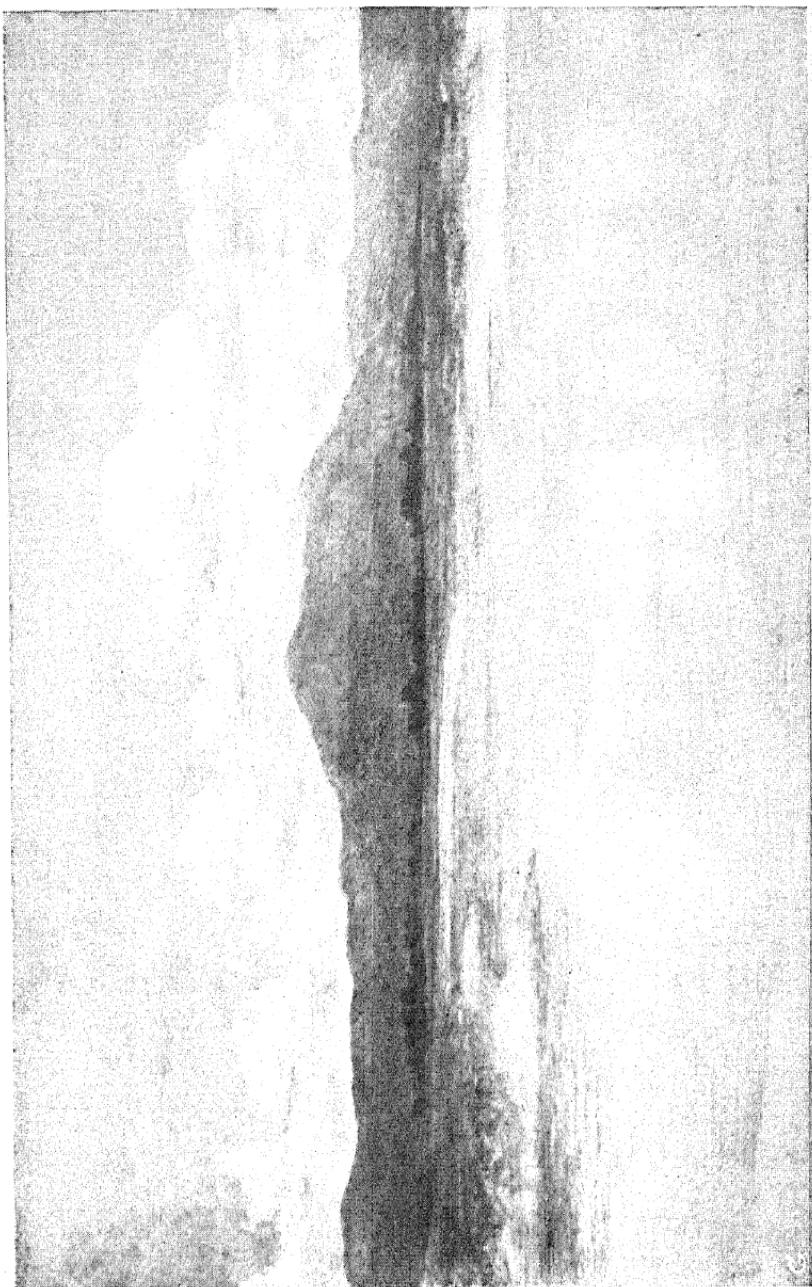
Now we pass a regular regiment of birds I do not know—cranes, I think—some four feet high, the colour of oyster catchers, long red bills and legs, and black and white plumage.

The Irrawaddy valley is here a little like the valley of the Forth. There is a centre hill for a Wallace monument, and the distant hills are like those in Perthshire, but both the valley and the river are wider; and the delicious summery sun and air are too ideal—we only had such summer weather when we were children.

Painted all afternoon, passing scenes. G. did a broad daylight effect of blue sky and distance, and the blue Ruby mountains and flecks of white cumuli and calm water, an effect in much too high a key for me to attempt; and I did a Punghis' bathing pool, in lower tones, a more getatable effect for my brush. . . .

We have to drop anchor at sunset in mid-stream, somewhere below Kyonkmyoung, to wait for the mail, and because we have no searchlight we cannot go on at night. The mountains are closer now, and towards evening they are reflected in violet and rose in the wide river.

. . . The lights go on, and I assure you our open air saloon, with its table set for dinner with silver, white waxy champak flowers, and white roses in silver bowls are delightful against the blue night outside. The scent of the champak would be too heavy, but for a pleasant air from up-stream, which we hope will help to clear out the piratical long-shore crew of Mandalay mosquitoes which we brought with us. We are only a few miles short of our proper destination for the night, but no matter, *we* are not in a hurry; the Burmans up-stream, waiting for their market, are



not either, they will just have to camp out for the night.

Before bedtime, G. and I and Miss Blunt, the only other passenger, go round the booths and make small purchases, and try to make ourselves understood by the jolly Burmese shopkeepers: the Indian shopkeepers speak English. A little later the family groups go to sleep in their stalls, their merchandise round them. A father and mother and child I saw, in pretty colours under a lamp, curled up in the space a European could barely sit on. And near our cabins there is a couple asleep on the deck, a dainty Burmese woman, her figure so neat, with narrow waist and rounded hip, and her hand and cheek on a dainty pillow, her husband lies opposite, and between them, also asleep, on the deck their mite of a child. Almost touching them is a priest still sitting up, his thoughts his company—possibly they are of Paternity. They all keep pretty quiet, they are not like those beasts on the B.I. boat; I daresay the quiet here is also due to better management. Now as I write the electric light goes out, and we light our candles—the ship is quiet fore and aft, the only sound the rippling of the Irrawaddy against our anchor chain and plates.

29th.—Second day from Mandalay. We have stopped three times at the river-side to-day. At each place a cascade of elegant people in heavenly colours came smiling down to our gangway planks, and when these were fixed, trooped on board; to buy purple velvet sandals, strips of silk, seeds, German hardware, American cigarettes, and goodness knows what else. I suppose I shall forget all these groups—and, colours, and expressions, in time—that is the gall and the wormwood of seeing beauty; I'd fain remember them longer and more vividly than I do.

At the first place we stopped two hours, so I went on shore, got a Burman as guide, and in a half-hour's run, got seven snipe and twelve pigeon. Pigeons, I was told,

would help the larder ; they were very tame, otherwise I'd hardly have cared to have let off at them.



Sabendigo for the night. In afternoon, stopped painting with reluctance, and if I'd stopped sooner might have beaten my small records at snipe.

The ladies elected to walk with me on shore, so, to give a sense of security, I took my gun! and as we went across the gangway, picked up a Burman, who I was told knew where there was game of some description, and the captain sent one of the Chittangong crew, and other two Burmans joined unofficially, so we made quite a party. The ladies shortly began to collect flowers, and not being so keen about sauntering as the second Charles, I set off at a mighty quick walk, the Burmans following at a dog-trot, whither, I'd no idea ; but it was nice going, through lanes at first, past an occasional transparent house of cane and matting, past cow-byres and cattle feeding, then into a sandy track through jungle of tall trees and thick undergrowth. Then the bamboo clumps got thicker and met overhead, and the afternoon sun

came through in golden threads and patches on the whitey-grey sand of the path. We hoped to see jungle-fowl in some of the more open places, and for an hour we dog-trotted, till we got a trifle warm—but never a sign of any really open snipe ground, and I almost turned back; but my Burmans pointed on and we soon turned to the left, crawled under thick bamboos and came on a clearing with water and paddy fields, and hope revived. But we walked round the edges of two or three fields without seeing anything, then just as the sun went down, the first snipe got up and flew straight at a Burman behind me, so it got away, and in five minutes—no, one minute—we were in ground absolutely alive with snipe, thick as midges and about as visible. I saw faintly a wisp get up, fired at one and it dropped somewhere, and heard the old familiar scraik, scraik on all sides as snipe got up at the shot, but it was hopelessly dark. It was a horrid sell, barring the satisfaction there always is in finding your game—I am not sure that killing it adds much—then we dog-trotted home to the river, along the soft sand track; it was very dark under the bamboos, but a new moon helped in the more open land. It was pretty going, all afternoon, with scenes like pictures by Rousseau and Daubigny, and twice, in the shadows of bamboo groves I saw veritable Monticelli's, when we met people and ox carts labouring through the sand; when forms and colours were all soft and blended, and the glow of day changed to night—Art is consoling when the bag is empty, even the purse sometimes!

Had a cast before we left with fly in the morning; fish were rising, had one on for a moment—saw a fish taken from a balance net on shore, seemed about seven to ten pounds, bright and silvery as a salmon, with a rather forked tail, should think said fish might be taken on a blue phantom or Devon. I have both here, and, granted a stay of any time, will try harling.

The shores of the river now are closer together,

wooded and steep, showing here and there boulders through the sand rather like the lower reaches of Namsen in Norway, which perhaps only describes the appearance to rather a restricted number of fortunates.

We saw two elephants grazing by the river-side ; I believe they were wild.



CHAPTER XXX

30TH JANUARY 1906.—Fog—6 o'clock a.m.—half daylight, and the anchor chain comes clanking on board—a cheery sound, the steady clink clank of the pall-pin in the winch—a comforting sound, and bit of machinery to anyone who has hauled in anchor overhand—what say you Baldy—or McIntyre, do you remember Rue Breichnich or Lowlandman's Bay, before we got a winch, and the last three fathoms out of green mud?—and the kink in the back before breakfast, and the feeling you'd never stand straight again in your life?

We barely have the anchor up and fast and have steamed less than ten minutes when we run into a fog bank set cunningly across the stream by some river Nat. The bell rings, "Stop her"—and plunge goes the anchor with the chain rattling out behind it, and we lie still again in the silence of the fog. Sea swallows come out of the mist and give their gentle call and flit out of sight, they give a regular flavour of the sea; the mist hangs on our clothes and drips from the corrugated iron roof of the flat, and our iron lower decks are shining wet.

9 o'clock.—The mist very gently rises off the river and wanders away in the tree-tops and climbs the distant mountains slowly, and the warm sun comes out to dry everything. The anchor is up again and its "paddle and go,"—the leadsmen is at his chant again. All the way up from Rangoon to Mandalay and from Mandalay here, two of the crew, one on either side of the bows, takes sounding with a bamboo, alternately singing out the feet in a

sing-song melancholy cadence that briskens and changes a little when the water suddenly shoals.



We draw four feet, and yesterday went over a bar covered by three feet nine inches only,—went towards it, backed, and went over it on our own following wave!

Kyankyet—We take on more wood faggots here to fill our bunkers. The wood smoke gives rather a pleasant scent in the air—pretty much like last halting place, same sunny dusty banks, plus a few rocks, and similar village of dainty cottages and of weather-bleached cane and teak showing out of green jungle. Above the place we stop at, a spit of sand runs into the river with a hillock and on it, there is a little golden pagoda amongst a few trees and palms: a flight of narrow white steps leads up to it, and below in the swirl of the stream are wavering reflections of gold, and white, and green foliage. And as usual there are figures coming to the ship along the shore, each a harmony of colours, each with a sharp shadow on the sand.

Whilst the wood goes on board we wander through the village and look at people weaving fringes of grass for thatch, much as grooms weave straw for the edges of stalls; then

to the pagoda on the hillock, and up the narrow flight of steps. It is not in very first-class repair, the river is eating away its base. To obtain merit the Burman prefers to build anew rather than to restore, and this one has done its turn. We saw several bronze and marble Buddhas under a carved teak shed ; some fading orchids lay before them. Two men were making wood carvings very freely and easily in teak. Miss B. and G. coveted a little piece of furniture in brown teak, covered with lozenges of greeny-blue stone. It looked like a half-grown bedstead, the colour very pretty. If we had had an interpreter, we might have saved it from the ruin. What I carried away was a memory of the blue above, the gliding river below, hot sun and stillness, and the hum of a large, iridescent black beetle that went blundering through scarlet poinsettia leaves into the white, scented blossoms of a leafless, grey-stemmed champak tree.

I am told there are barking deer and jungle fowl within an hour of the ship, elephant, rhinoceros, sambhur, and much big game within thirty miles, but we are on the move again, and my heart bleeds.—I cannot try for these for I have neither battery, guides, nor camp equipment.

At Tagaung, stopping-place for the ruby mines, we tie up for the night—a charmingly wooded country.

In "Wild Sports of Burmah and Assam," by Col. Pollock and W. S. Thom, published in 1900, you read that "some of the best big game shooting in the world, with the least possible trouble and expenditure, can be had in Upper Burmah, and this is the place to set out for it—from Mandalay, some seventy-seven miles. Mercifully, I did not read this till after we had left Burmah, or I'd have felt frightfully unhappy passing it all. Even now, as I read their descriptions, I feel vexed, to a degree, that I did not know more about the possibilities of sport in Upper Burmah before starting North. The above book must be invaluable to any keen sportsman who goes to Burmah ; but keen he must be, and prepared to *hunt* for his quarry ; game is not driven up to him, the jungle is too dense.

I will now proceed to write about fish. As the sun set they were rising beside us, making rings in the golden flood, and the reflected woods of the far side of the river, so I put on a Loch Leven fly cast, and got a beauty right away, of about one pound ; a shimmering, silvery fish, between a sea-trout and a whiting as to colour, and I missed other rises. A Woods and Forests' man on board told me he had recently caught a similar fish on a small fly rod ; it weighed five pounds and leapt like a sea-trout, but no one apparently knows much about the possibilities of fishing here with rod and modern tackle. We then got a hand-line and a cod-hook from the engineer, and baited with squeezed bread, the size of a pigeon's egg, and fished on the bottom, and almost at once had on a heavy fish. It pulled tremendously and got a lot of line out, and wandered up and down the middle of the river ; on a salmon rod it would have played long and heavily. We got it hand over hand alongside, aft the paddle-box, and a Burman in a canoe hitched a noose over its tail, and we hoisted it on board. I couldn't see the beast very clearly, as it was growing dusk, and all hands crowded round us to give advice. It looked rather like a cod, and weighed thirty-five lbs. I'd have guessed it to be eighteen lbs., but its weight was quite out of proportion to its measurements. Shortly after we got another—twenty lbs. They have red firm flesh, and to eat are like sturgeon, they say. The sporting silvery fish was called Mein and Butter fish, and they are said to be very good to eat, but they have a beard, which doesn't answer to my standard of a game fish. I got about a dozen of these smaller fellows of about one lb. each, not a bad way of putting in an hour or so, when the time does not allow of gunning ashore.

31st—Tegine.—This morning we passed on our right the elephant Kedar Camp, where natives are preparing to rope in wild elephants as they do in Mysore. The bank was steep, about level with the top of our funnel. The low jungle had been cleared, and we saw screens and houses

of green thatch and palm leaves. A very brown Britisher came out of his tent as we passed, his face half white with soap lather, and his shirt sleeves rolled up; he did unintelligible semaphore signalling with both arms, a razor in one hand, paper in the other. He likewise spoke to us in words that were barely audible for the sound of the rush of the water. When we pieced together what each had heard, it came to “what the blankety blank has come over your—tut tut—down-stream cargo boat? She was to bring me tea and sugar! And I’ve no whiskey, and—” but there was a stiff turning just at this part of the river, and the skipper and pilot and everyone on board gave it all their attention, or we’d have been ashore. Soon after we met the dilatory down-river cargo boat, and waited where the channel was wide and she passed, its master shouting to us that the channel somewhere further up was “only four feet six, and very difficult.” She had stranded somewhere for twenty-four hours or so. There were apparently only two passengers on board! I don’t think these good days for passengers can last, the crowd is bound to come.

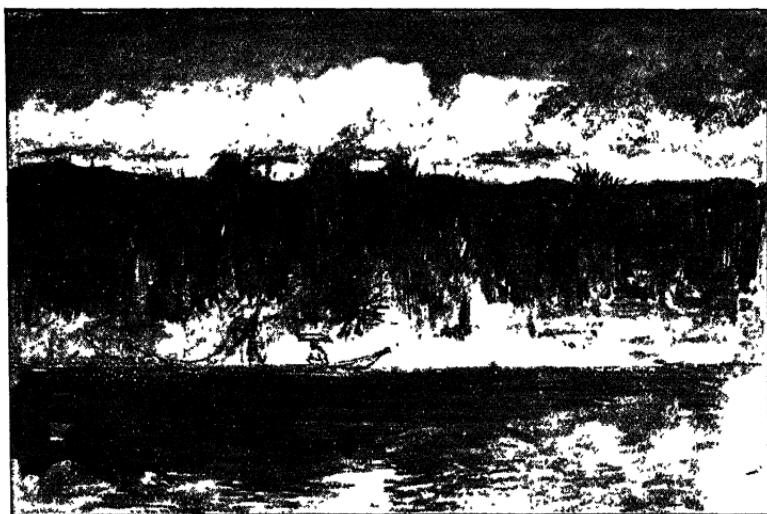
Next small item in to-day’s entertainment. An otter,



rather larger than any I’ve seen at home, performed to us on a sandbank, danced, and rolled over its own shadow, or possibly a fish, in apparent exuberance of spirit.

It was a very pretty sight through the glass, and I think I could have got him with a rifle, but it was rather far to risk a shot and wounding with my Browning’s colt pistol—the Woods and Forest man, by the way, had a Browning colt, and rather fancied himself as a shot. He told me his terrier puts up otters pretty often in the streams in the jungle, in family parties, greatly to the amusement of the otters. So there’s another heading for a game book here; that might begin with elephant and finish up with mouse-deer and button-qaUIL. What a list of water-fowl there would be, and where

would turtle go?—under Game or Fish? They lay their eggs on the sandbanks in numbers, and these fetch quite a big price, four annas each. I'd willingly sacrifice a night's sleep to see one come out of the water up the sand, and to "turn it" would make me feel at the Ultima Thule of the world abroad.



All the way along the edge of the river, where there are not trees, there is Kaing or elephant grass—grass that waves some eighteen feet high and runs far inland, and here and there are bits of tree jungle. Every now and then we see some bird or beast which we have not seen before outside of a Zoo; a grand eagle is in sight just now, no vulture this fellow; he looks twice the size of our golden eagle, and sits motionless on a piece of driftwood in the middle of a sandbank. I can only just make out his or her mate soaring against the woods on the hills behind. On a bank to our right there's a whole crowd of large birds—as we get closer I can count their feathers with my glasses; they are not beauties—vultures of some kind, and gorged at that, to judge from their lazy movements; their plumage is a

grey, chocolate colour; their lean bare neck and heads are black or deep plum colour. On the very edge of the sandbank there's a string of white sea-swallows, sitting each on its own reflection. There are several kinds, and they rise as we pass, and I see, for the first time, the Roseate Tern, a sea-swallow with deep lavender and black feathers, rather telling with its scarlet bill. To complete this menagerie's inventory we pass four elephants bathing; two on the bank are dry, and blow sand over themselves from their trunks, and are the same dry khaki colour as the banks; the other two lie in the water, their great tubby sides, big as a whale's back, are black as sloes. Through the glass we see them rise slowly and stalk up the bank, getting their little feet all sandy again.

We went aground about five or six p.m., and are aground, and will probably take root here. The Chittagong crew are *talking* and working like niggers to kedge her off, and she won't budge. I'm sorry for the Captain; it seems running things rather fine to expect him to take his ship drawing four feet, over a bar only covered three feet.

In the pause, with the glasses I spy geese on a distant point, so with the steward as interpreter, engage a dug-out that came alongside to trade to take me in pursuit, but as I get out the gun, a Burman's boat comes down and passes within a few yards of them and they shift. The boatman tells me there are deer about—points to woods and jungle within a mile on the river's right bank, but time will not allow us to go after them. So we make a shooting engagement for the "morn's morn" if we are still on the sandbank.

The crew struck work and singing at ten and left things to Providence; the captain didn't believe in this; he remarked "All things come to those who wait, but I know a plan much slicker; for he who bustles for what he wants, gets things a d——d sight quicker!"—and called on them in their quarters—he had a whole stick when he went in—and they got to work again. He believes that if the river

was buoyed by a white man instead of a native we wouldn't be fast now. I should think it is just the sort of work that would need a European, but I rather think after watching the soundings we made, that there was no deeper channel over the sand anywhere—at any rate none could be found from our small boat. They kept at this keding till midnight, and later, dropping the anchor ahead from the small boat, then hauling the ship up to it by the chain and steam windlass—with the variations splendid exercise for all hands.

At first the flat, as it drew less than we did, was left behind a little, and our ship did this fighting with sand and water alone. They started again to the work early in the morning and by breakfast time, by constant steaming ahead and backing, had burrowed a channel in the sand; then went back and clawed on to the flat and steamed away for Chittagong distant a mile or two. As we went the anchor chains were unshackled and overhauled to get the twists out of them; and both anchors and chains were bright as silver from their rude polishing in the sand.

It is perishingly cold at Chittagong, *i.e.*, in shade in the early morning, but it is bracing, A.L. weather for doing things. Last night I had three blankets and two sleeping suits and felt cold at that. The sides and windows of our cabin being made of open lattice woodwork we fix up some newspapers and a mat or two we have over these, which makes all the difference.

We had only half-an-hour for the bazaar at Chittagong. By the way I can't vouch for the spelling of this or any other names of places en route, but this is the way our First Mate spells it. We have no good map on board to give the names, but there are a number of books, and a piano, and many other comforts that one would hardly expect on a cargo steamer, so I think the Company, having done so well for their passengers, might run to a framed map of Upper and Lower Burmah.

At Kalone the people stood in splendid groups at the

jungle edge waiting for the arrival of the market. It was absolutely a *Fête Champêtre*, but more brilliant and classic than Watteau ever can have seen. There were no houses visible, just the steep sandy bank with roots dangling out



of it, and splendid trees above like sycamores and ash, some with creepers pouring from their highest branches. Against the green depths were these groups of happy people in

delightful colours, some sitting and others standing, some in the full sunlight, others further in the jungle amongst the shadowy trunks and fern palms.

My Conscience pricked me and said "draw," but I said, "I'm bothered if I do, let's get into the jungle, if it's only for an hour, and see more new things, close," so we did, got a guide, and arranged to return at first blast of the steamer's horn, and away we went *ventre d terre* to a jheel said to be near, and had not more than enjoyed a glance at this pretty watery opening in the woods when up got a snipe with its old sweet song, and along with the snipe were any number of other waders—what a place for a naturalist ! The first wisp went straight towards some paddy workers so I only got one flanker, and just as I was in the middle of them, beginning a record bag the horn sounded—the vexation of it ! We turned and hoofed it back ; under shadows of grand trees, over brown fallen leaves, past sunbeam lit girls in velvet sandals, coming from the ship, with bundles of purchases poised on their heads, and on board by the last plank of the gangway, muddy and hot and desperately annoyed at having to cut short a good morning's shooting. Some of the snipe were larger and deeper in colour than those I am familiar with—Painted snipe I believe.

A delightful country this would be for a holiday in a native river boat. What a pity it is so far from home ; with a party and a boat I believe one could have a splendid time drifting down, there would be fishing, walks, rowing, sailing, shooting, sketching, and all in a delicious climate, and all the sport bar elephants free, and amongst courteous people with all the supplies of "the saut market" at arm's length from the Flotilla Company's steamers. Why not charter a big native dug-out up the river at Bhamo—sink it for a day or two—for reasons—then drift and row down. You could get up to Bhamo in a week or less, or in two or three days shortly, when there's a railway, and take, say three weeks down to Mandalay.

Kalone to Katha is interesting all the way. At Katha the mountains on the west come closer to the river. There is a short railway branch from this place to the line to Mandalay. I hardly like to mention a railway up here, it sounds so prosaic and so unassociated with any of the wild surroundings; but there—it's a solid fact, you can come up here from Rangoon in next to no time and see nothing on the way, by train. We walk past the little station, the first piece of blackened ground we have seen for many a day—a ballast truck, ashes, and coals—impossible! From the wire fence round the station-house and from its wooden eaves hang numbers of orchids, nameless and priceless—impossible again!

It is a pleasant country round Katha, once you get away from the line. There is low ground cleared for crops then knolly wooded hills within easy reach, and higher hills beyond. The air was still and wisps of wood-smoke from distant village fires hung in level bands above the plain. Miss B. and G. went to see the pagoda, I did the same, and also took my gun in case of a wet place and snipe. They saw a procession to a priest's funeral—one of the regular shows of Burmah, I only saw jungle, and brakes of white roses with rather larger blossoms than our sweet briar, growing to about twenty feet high. These grew many feet below the level of the river in the wet season, so I gather they spend several months in the rains under water: I also saw vultures, eagles, hawks, and a big kind of lapwing and snipe; but the snipe here were cunning, and got up wild and flew far, so I only got a small bag. But putting the afternoon's stravaig and the morning's ramble together made quite a decent day's exercise; and I believe the two or three hours in the jungle with its strange sights and sounds, flowers, birds, and beasts, were as interesting as a Phoungies' funerals.

CHAPTER XXXI

2ND FEBRUARY.—There was a river mist this morning, the sun shining through, and we “slept in” for there was no engine to awaken us. When we did awaken, it was to the tune of reed instruments like our pipe chanters. These headed a single and double file procession to the pagoda along the top of the river bank. The arrangement might have been taken from the procession of the Parthenon. Most of the people were women, some carried offerings in lacquer bowls on their heads, others carried between them pagodas and pyramids in wicker-work hung with new pots and pans and odd bits of pretty colours and flowers. Others carried round palm leaf fans, the whole effect through the sunny morning mist was exquisite in colour and perfectly decorative. I think it was part of the Phoungie funeral of last night. We got fairly cold looking at it from the deck in dressing-gowns.

. . . It gets cold truly—morning tub makes one gasp, but the Burmans are bathing and soaping themselves this morning alongside, apparently enjoying the cold water as much as they do down south.

The fog lifts and we swing out and into the current at eight o’clock; the mail boat that came up last night just ahead of us, and we go surging up in her wake, two mighty fine children of the great Cleutha; Glasgow owned, Clyde built and engineered—900 horse-power has this Mandalay, and she has twenty years behind her, and the engines run as smoothly as if she were new: and the whole ship fore and aft is so well kept, she might have come from the makers yesterday! I don’t say that the mail boat in

front exactly adds to the beauty of the scenery but it gives a big sense of successful enterprise. How gratifying it must be to Germans and other foreigners to have the use of such a fine line of steamers for their goods.

The cottages on your left after Katha are rather pretty. They are on piles of course, on account of the floods in the monsoon, not "because of ye tygers which here be very plentifull," as the old travellers had it. Their silvery weather-worn teak or cane showing here and there, is a pleasant contrast to the rich green foliage. We pass so close to the bank that we can see the bright colours of the women's tamaines inside them and through the trees we get glimpses of the blue hills to the west—d— we are aground again—and my snipe shooting at Moda won't come off—horrid sell! No—I believe she's over. No, she's stuck!

. . . But we got off—and have arrived at Moda; and I think the show of native beauty crowding down the white sand here is even more effective and exquisite than any village crowds we have seen so far on either of the two sides of the river.

The girls are pictures; one has a yellow orchid between her golden coloured cheek and jet black hair, another a Marechal Niel rose above her forehead. There are old and young; Shans, Burmans, Chinese, Kachins—the young Burmese beauties vastly set off by the various northern tribes. Up the sand I see, for example, a group of three, an old lady and two young things sitting under a pink parasol, each with knees tucked up in a red purple and lemon yellow silk tamaine or tight skirt. Imagine the soft rose light from the parasol over the white jackets and silk and the sharp shadows on the sand. How graceful the owner of the parasol was when she stood up! I think it was her duenna who toppled off the edge of the gangway with one of the Chittagong crew in the push to come aboard. The old lady's face puckered as she went over, but she was out in a second, and came aboard with

the jolly crowd, smiling like the rest. The pretty girls drop their red and blue velvet sandals with a clatter on to our iron deck when they come up the gangway, shuffle their toes into them and waddle off to the stalls with an air. No—waddle is not the word, its a little body twist rather like that of our French cousins, and their frank look is Spanish, but with less langour and a little more lift in it for fun ! Leaving all this grace and colour behind, we marched away with a gun and two men, a native and a Burman, which surely proves the vandalism of our upbringing.

But I may have scored by not staying and painting, granted I may never forget the charm of the mid-day stillness behind the village, and the walk through half jungle, half cultivated country with everything asleep in the quiet and warmth, and never a chance of game unless I trod on it. Through the village palms and trees I came on a lakelet with short grass and tall white briar rose bushes round its edge. It was almost covered with a water plant with leaves like a strawberry, which made a dull rose tracery across the reflected blue sky. There were three white ibis, distant dark blue hills and trees, and jungle grass and their reflections ; a cormorant and sea swallow were fishing, and a little pagoda, with gleaming golden Hti hung its reflection in the mirror. It was so still and the air so sweet that I felt perfectly happy with never a thing to fire at but an occasional dove, or curiously coloured lapwing. The only thing I actually did fire at was a swagger bluebird whose plumage I did covet. It let me have five shots, at from seventy to eighty yards but never closer, and went off flaunting its green and blue plumage derisively, and I hurried home at top speed long after the second whistle, rather glad I'd done no damage to anything.

At Shewgee in the afternoon we pulled out of the sunlight on the river into the shadow of a steep bank with some sixty black-tarred wooden steps up it. Creepers

and foliage hung in masses over the edge and on the top were the usual groups of brightly dressed people and palms and trees in half tone, against a warm sky; and a pagoda too, of course, in white and gold, with a banner staff in white glass mosaic. The dainty figures came trooping down the long black steps and surged on board, first of all politely making way to let us go ashore.

We wandered through, I think, the neatest village we have seen, each dainty mat house had a tiny compound with palms, trees, and roses and other flowers round it. We heard "The Potter thumping his wet clay" and stopped and watched. He, or she, sat on the ground with feet out in front and modelled bowls round the left hand, thumping and patting the stiff clay with a little wooden spade, and without any further appliance made complicated forms perfectly symmetrical. I'd no idea such symmetry could be attained without the use of the wheel.

As we came back the darkness was falling and there were fires in most of the houses on trays of earth and the light shone through the bamboo walls, and we could see figures sitting beside them, either for warmth or possibly to get away from mosquitoes.

We met a gold prospector here, a lean, brown, blue-eyed man in khaki shirt and well-cut, and well-worn tweed continuations. I think all prospectors must be somewhat alike. The last I saw was a similar type—drinking beer in "The First and Last,"—Port Stanley—he was just back from "the Coast," and his rig, and particularly, his expression were much the same, but the man from Terra del had found gold, "like melon seeds—G—D—two inches deep!"—this one hadn't.

Dinner talk suddenly interesting—the new passenger, Captain Kirke, R.A., commandant of the military police is just in from the hills on the west, where he has been on a punitive expedition. His three hundred Sikhs and Ghurkas and ponies are on a small government steamer which we have passed and repassed lately, so we have the

latest news of our neighbours to the west, the “partially subdued” Chins. The expedition was, I understand, to settle some family grievances of these people. One chief had taken some of a neighbouring chief’s people when he wasn’t at home, and had them tied to trees and little arrows fired into them, one by one, so that in the end they died. The cruel chief’s wives were said to be the instigators of this “most bloody business” and the leading lady’s photograph warranted the assertion. Her face was tattooed and was curiously like a Red Indian’s. I have read in a book that the Chins tattoo their wives’ faces to prevent them being stolen for their beauty! I gather this punitive expedition that we have come across unexpectedly, was carried out without a shot being fired, so it won’t be in the papers. The wicked chief and his wives awoke one morning to find their village being looked at severely by two mountain guns, and a camera, and encircled with rifles, so they came along quietly—some ten chiefs all told. I think Captain Kirke was naturally a little pleased at the persuasive effect of his pet guns, and gratified that he had managed to bring them over the difficult country, and civil objections—but if I had run that show I’d have felt much inclined to have fired just one shot, for the sake of a medal and newspaper laurels.

We really begin to feel at the Empire’s frontier now, when we have pointed out to us to the northward, the mountain tops where the military police, i.e., native troops and lonely British officers keep watch and ward over our furthest marches—heliographing between times to Bhamo for “news from Town.”

3rd February.—We got away early this morning, and were stopped by a fog bank, so I saw the Defiles. The Defiles are considered the thing to see; and they are interesting enough; we passed the Third Defile down the river somewhere. At this the Second the river narrows and the mountains rise pretty steeply on either side, and are

clothed with grand trees and jungle. It is less distinctive scenery than that of the wider valleys of the Irrawaddy; you might see similar features in many other rivers. At full flood the force of water down this narrow gorge must be rather tremendous, it is said to be forty fathoms deep then, and the captain told me, that when steaming up at fourteen knots, they could sometimes barely make way! Coming down must be kittle steering, I'd think. It is a good country for elephants, I am told.

After the Defiles we stop at Sinkan on the left bank, where the river spreads out again into the more usual style of Irrawaddy scenery, the valley very wide, the sandy river's edge capped with a jungle of waving kaing, or elephant grass, eighteen feet high, and over and beyond bluey-green tree-clad mountains, not very high, but high enough to be interesting and to raise hope.



I made a sketch of cottages at Sinkan. The blue and black of the Shans, and light blue colours of the Chinese dresses, begins to tell more distinctly among the tulip colours of the Burmans. The men here are armed with

swords. The Shan's blade is slightly curved and pointed, with no guard, the hilt sometimes of ivory and the scabbard richly ornamented with silver, and the shoulder belt is of red or green velvet rope; the Kachins' swords that I have seen are more simply made as regards their scabbards and are square across the end of the blade.

Only you who fish can understand what great restraint I was obliged to exercise here; as I painted on the fore-deck a grand fish rose in the stream that comes in beside us, within casting distance of our bow, and with the surge of a thirty pound salmon! And yet I went on painting! I confess I very nearly did not.

At Bhamo the river broadens into a lake again, something like what it is between Saigang and Mandalay—beautiful enough to travel a long way to see.

There is a little desert of sand between the water's edge and Bhamo, across it were trekking in single file Burmans, Shans, and Chinese, to and from our steamer with lines of ponies, with bales of merchandise on their pack saddles.

We look at the distant mountains beyond Bhamo that bound the horizon—they tempt us and we wonder if we should not venture further north; and take the caravan route into China—rather a big affair for peaceful tourists. Captain Kirke came in strongly here, said, "Go, of course—I will show you how to do it, give you ponies, and find you guide and servants." So we have taken our courage in both hands and decided to go. One of his men in the meantime, had gone and brought an elephant, an enormous beast, over the sand; I am sure it was twice the height of any I've seen in Zoos. It went down on its knees and elbows, bales of cotton were piled alongside, and Miss B. and G. climbed up these on to the pad, and I got up by its tail and the crupper. Then up it heaved, and on we held, to ropes, and went off for half a mile over the hot, soft sand; Captain Kirke riding a pretty Arab pony. I'd never been on an elephant before,

to my knowledge, nor had I ever experienced the sensation of the black hair pricking through thin trousers, or the besom of a tail whacking my boots—I consider we entered Bhamo with a good deal of éclat.

4th February.—We all went shopping on the elephant, Captain Kirke kindly showing us round. He and his pony



might have passed under our steed's girth. It made a pretty fair block in the traffic of China Street, but the style of shopping seemed to take the popular taste; and from our point of view we could study at ease the various types

of people. The old ladies in tall blue serge turbans and tunics and putties of the same colour rather struck me—they are Shans from the East—with little shrewd twinkling black eyes, short noses and a gentle expression, and that break in the eyebrow, which I think characteristic of a certain dark Celtic type.

The above sketch represents a corner of the market; in the centre a Kachin fairly characteristic but too tall, beside him his sturdy kilted wife, with the usual basket on her back; other figures, a Burmese girl, a Chinese woman, Sikhs, and distant Shan woman.

China Street, the principal street in Bhamo, is only about two hundred yards long, but it is fairly wide and crammed full of interest to the newcomer; it is so purely Chinese, you only see a Burman, a Burmese woman rather, here and there, the wife of some Chinese trader. Burmese women they say, incline to marry either Indians or Chinese, for though these men are not exactly beautiful they are great workers, whilst the Burman is a pleasure-loving gentleman of the golden age. The Burmese and Indian cross is a sad sight.

We stopped at a leading citizen's house with whom Captain K. conversed in Chinese, and why or how I don't know, but we found ourselves sitting in his saloon, beyond his outer court, and it was just as if I'd dropped into an old Holbein interior, it was all so subdued and harmonious and perfect in finish. There was lacquer work, and ivory-coloured panels on the walls, brown beams above, and orange vermilion paper labels with black lettering hanging from them in rows, each purporting the titles of our host; he wore a loose black silk waistcoat with buff sleeves, buff shorts, black silk skull-cap, and a weedy black moustache which he touched every now and then with little pocket comb; the colouring of his dress, and complexion, and background, all in perfect harmony. He had gentle clever overhung eyes and was quite the great gentleman, entertaining us intruders with calm smiling

affability. In a court which he showed us, he had a raised octagonal fish pond, and in his porch his people were unloading ponies of bales of merchandise. Both the persons and the surroundings of his establishment seemed to date away back to the happy and cruel Middle Ages.

At a shop over the way our elephant stood in the sun, the Burman on its head with his white jacket and light red scarf round his hair, calmly smoking a cheroot, a welcome contrast to the busy keen Chinese life ; above him hung large orange-red paper lanterns with large Chinese inscriptions. At the young merchant's shop over the way, we bought finely cut Chinese tobacco, and a number of Chinese silk satchels, note books, and other things at trifling prices. The young owner I'd like to be able to describe ; I don't think I have ever seen such perfection of finish of dress, and even form ; his complexion was palest coffee-colour, teeth perfectly white and symmetrical, cap and jacket of the most delicate finish, silk shoes and white socks, and baggy trousers, all as if split new and of perfection of workmanship, and he totted up his accounts and did all the business with a polished self-possessed manner ! I must say my first impression of the heathen Chinee at Bhamo was tremendously in his favour ; in many ways even the coolies, or Chinese porters, struck me favourably, by their simple kit, blue tunic and shorts, and their sturdy limbs and absence of any roughness of manner.

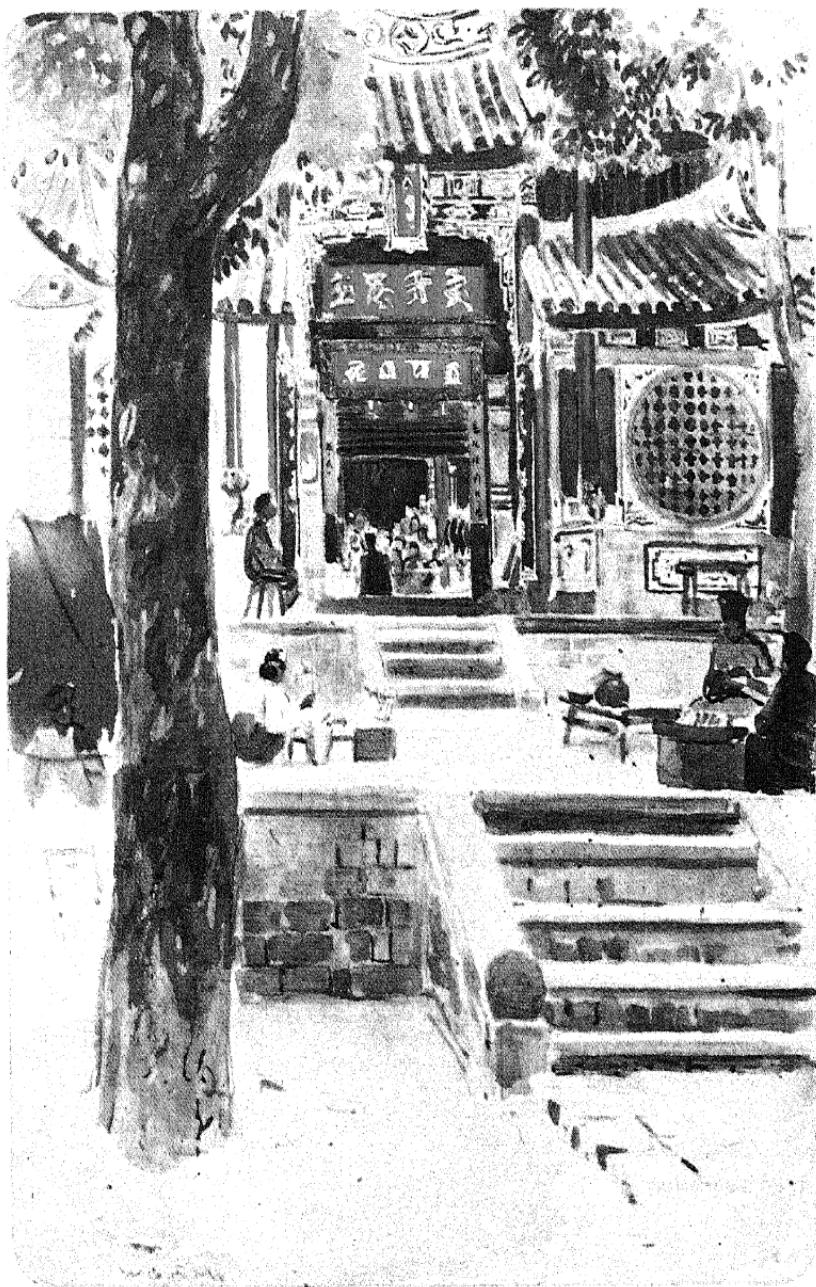
A few yards along the road brought us to the Joss House. It would take many drawings, to describe the many arrangements of courts and steps and quaintly curved roofs, and the foliage and flickering shadows. In the interior were Chinese and some Burmese, and all the pastime of their lives seemed to go on there, prayers, feeding, gambling and theatricals, at the same or at different times without hurry. We patronised the gambling corner—gave the principal high priest who did the honours of the place to us five rupees to gamble with for us—he

was a fine big man with a potent expression—he lost and won a good deal, then lost the lot and two or three more rupees, and went on playing with his own money. It was delightful to see the hearty way these gamblers laughed when they lost, and chuckled when they won: I got a respect for gambling that I'd never previously had. I've generally seen people get a little white when they lose—and—well—I do not care for their subdued expressions when they win—but there was a boyish hilarity and hardihood about this gambling that made it almost attractive.

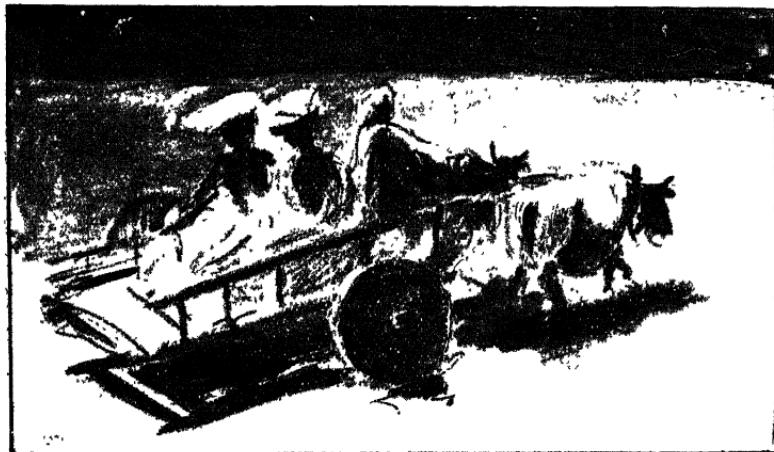
Here is one view of the Joss House. The Chinamen were intensely interested, as I painted, and crowded round. They were perfectly polite and well-intentioned as also are the Burmese, but I think the Chinaman's interest in the technique is so great that he cannot keep at any distance, so it was an enormous effort to concentrate on the subject and not just to draw the nearest heads. Here is one, however, a boy with fur cap, his complexion was like fine China and showed great finish of form. I noticed they were all very clean indeed, their clothes spotless, and the scent of their tobacco quite good.



I had sent my Boy round to find a place where we might stay, and on our return to the steamer he told me the Dak bungalow was occupied, likewise the circuit house, so we were stranded and homeless on the banks of the Irrawaddy. We then went up to the club, and there found to our relief our Boy was mistaken, and that the Dak bungalow was available. A member of the club kindly introduced himself and entertained us whilst we waited for our host, we noticed his hands were both in bandages, but of this more anon. From the club we went back in the starlight to our home on the ship for one more night, our minds at rest and bodies refreshed. The ladies



drove in a bullock cart, the writer walked behind—the sand and track were too rough for The Bhamo gharry, and truly we considered our cart was more picturesque and comfortable. The grey wood of the cart and the ladies'



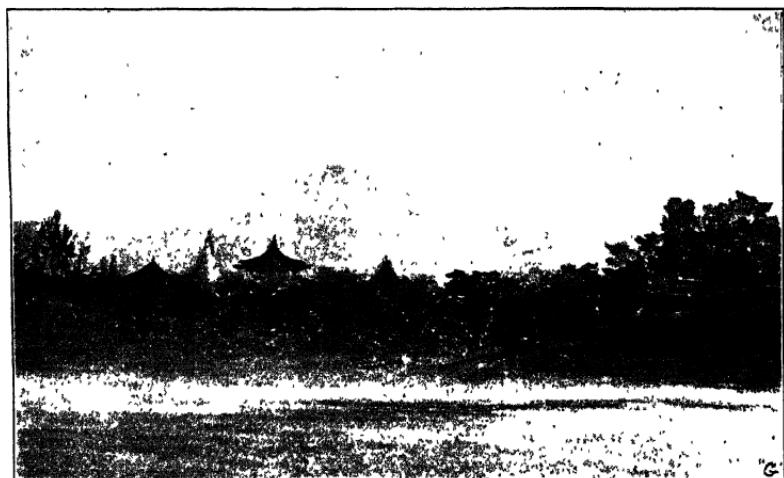
white hats and dresses, and the natives' white robes and the grey white sand and white oxen, all blended into a very pretty moth-like harmony; and overhead the sky was mat blue with many solemn stars twinkling. As we crossed the little desert of sand we passed the camp and fires of the Northern peoples, beside their scores of ponies; and bales of cotton, and pack saddles; everything uncovered and open on the dry sand, no need here at this season for shelter excepting from the sun at mid-day.

Miss B. leaves us here, going south by what is called the Ferry Boat, a most excellent little steamer, with roomy, comfortable cabins. It goes down to Katha, thence she goes by train to Mandalay, and straight on to Rangoon, and her R.E. brother in India. We decide to stick to steamers in Burmah as long as we can, the extra time spent on steamers is well balanced by their comfort as against the dust and racket of a train.

The morning fog gave us a little respite—let us have

an extra half-hour on board before landing our goods and chattels—but the horn was let off pretty often before we got our luggage up the loose sand on to the level. Chinese coolies in blue dungaree tunics, wide straw hats and ditto shorts carried it in baskets slung from either end of bamboo poles balanced over their shoulders. They are sturdy, cheery fellows, with well-shaped calves and muscular short feet. When the steamer cleared off we were fairly marooned on the sandbank.

No bullock-carts had come, so G. and I sat on her saddle-box and sketched a departing caravan of mules and ponies, each laden with two bales of cotton,—a Chinaman to every four ponies. There were eighty-four ponies, and they filed away, jingling into the morning mist that hung low on the sand flat. It was a little cold, but we got



warmer as the sun rose over the Bhamo trees, and pagoda, and Joss House. At first the coolies stood round us, and our baggage, and took stock of us, but gradually the interest flagged, and they sat down, and we drew them, and G. made this sketch of Bhamo, and the sunrise over China. . . . A Burmese woman came to the sand's edge with her baby, and built a shelter with a few bamboos, and some

matting for roof, and the baby played in the patch of shadow. As it got hotter we grew wearied of waiting. At last our *Boy* got the two errant bullock-carts, and we went off in procession, a big bullock-cart with our luggage in front, a Burman youth on top with long black hair escaping from a wisp of pink silk, a Macpherson tartan putsoe round his legs, a placid expression, and a cheroot, of course. G. and her maid came behind with recent fragile purchases; pottery, in another bullock-cart, with an older Burman whose face was a delight—so wrinkled, and wreathed with smiles. I tailed behind and sketched as per margin, as we went through the sand—shockingly unacademical wasn't it, to draw walking?



Our first Dak bungalow experience was short. We had just settled down when word came we were to occupy the Deputy-Commissioner's bungalow which is apparently empty, so we only had tiffin in the Dak bungalow.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE D. C. Bungalow is certainly very nice, bar *The Mystery*. The roses are splendid, in masses ; and orchids hang everywhere. I suppose the interest in them at home accounts for their being hung here on every cottage. We had almost a deck load of them on board this morning ; roots that may cost a great price in Britain may be bought here for a few pence. They say the road over to China is festooned with orchids, and jungle-fowl sit amongst them and crow. G. intends to get some, and take them home, which means more glass, of course : and I hope to pot the jungle-fowl, so we both feel we have an object in life, and an apology for our itinerance.

But first, a word about THE MYSTERY. It was very delightful being asked to put up in such a charming bungalow—the invitation came by heliograph from a little fort up in the woods on the mountains, many miles away to the north-west, where the Deputy-Commissioner, Mr Levison, was going his rounds.

There was a silence and a stillness about the house that was almost eerie ; the impress on a cushion, the cigarette ash, and torn letters on the verandah looked as if the house was in use ; but a second glance showed that fine dust lay over all, and made the house feel deserted. The old Burmese man-servant disappeared when we arrived, so G. and I went through the house alone, to fix on our room. We had done this, and I had gone downstairs when G. called me. She had turned over a mattress, and on it was a great space of *congealed blood* just where a man's throat might have been ! I only gathered after-

wards how much alarmed she was; and she only gathered afterwards how much alarmed I was. When G. went downstairs I made an exhaustive inspection; the blood was barely a day old! and on the floor I found spots, then gouts, and then marks of naked, gory feet leading to, and from the little bathroom—it looked horribly like “withered murder!” Had the silent bare-footed Burman . . .? And what had been done with the . . . Yes! there was a streak along the foot of the door—it had been dragged out!—Or was it floor varnish? Should I question the servant—would he, or could he, explain? No—I decided it was too late to do anything. So we both pretended we thought little of the matter, turned over the mattress, put our own on top, bolted the doors, put two Colt-Browning repeaters under our pillows, and went asleep, and in the morning were so pleased to find our throats were not slit.

When Captain Kirke and Lieutenant Carter came round later, I had to thank them for their Bundabust, and casually inquired if the last resident in the bungalow was known to be still alive; for the bedroom was so bloody! “Why—Baines!” they said, “of course; he was here two nights! you saw him yesterday at the Club—the man with his hands bandaged; that’s Baines; he’s always getting into pickles—he nearly bled to death! We had a farewell evening at the Club, and in the night he got up for soda water, the bottle burst and cut his hands, then he cut his feet on the broken glass going to the bathroom to bandage his hands, got into bed, and the bandages came off in the night, and in the morning he was found in a faint—therefore the blood on the mattress.” *The mystery was explained—And there had nearly been a tragedy.*

These deputy hosts of the Deputy-Commissioner, after so kindly relieving our minds, drove us to the polo grounds in their brake, behind unbroken ponies, along a half-made road, which was highly exhilarating—but we feared nothing after our late escape—were we not each a neck to the good?

The Maidan was pretty—a pleasant plain of green grass, beautifully framed with distant jungle and mountains. G. and I made the audience at first, with two or three dozen Burmans and Sikhs, Then General Macleod and Mrs Macleod came, and his aide-de-camp (the General is on an inspection round, of the military police stations), and Mr and Mrs Algy of the Civil Police, a man whose name I can't remember, and that was all the gallery, so there was little to take away from the interest of the game, which was fast, and the turf perfection.

In the evening a delightful dinner-party, the above two deputies entertaining the aforesaid company in the Fort.

CHAPTER XXXIII

7TH FEBRUARY.—To-day a young soldier and an artist conclude that they both had their fill of exercise yesterday.

We started at break of day and didn't get home till after sunset and then had to dine at the old Fort and witness a Kachin Pwé in the moonlight till the small hours.

I confess I was tired after the day's shoot, but so was Carter and he was in the pink of condition, which soothed me. It was a memorable day amongst my sporting days, because of the novelty of surroundings, not on account of the bag of snipe.

We turned out before daybreak, which was neither novel nor pleasant; it was cold and very uncomfortable getting from warm blankets into the chilly morning in the draughty bungalow, and reminded me of the way we are turned out in winter starts for Black Game, and woodcock in Morven—being routed out half awake in the dark by a certain energetic sportsman, hurricane lamp in hand.

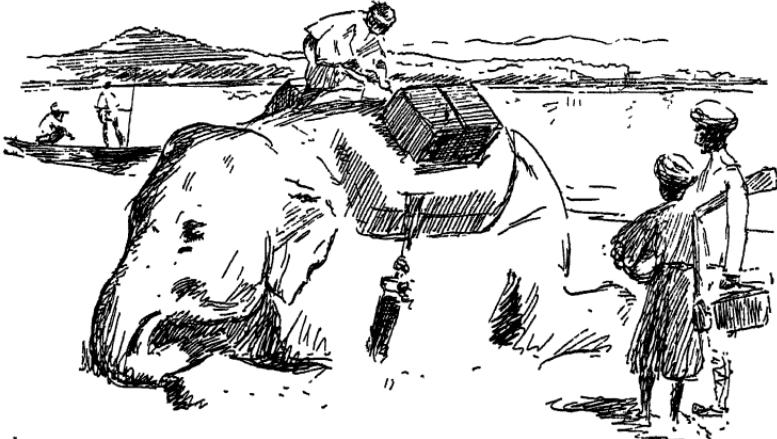
I had to meet Carter at the Fort where we were to take canoes, and an elephant, across the Irrawaddy to a jheel, five miles through jungle.

The sun came up splendidly, hot and yellow over China, and warmed me comfortably as I drove to the Fort, and the mist off the plain rose and became sunlit cumuli to lie for the rest of the day on the shoulders of the Kachin Highlands.

Carter, I found in the midst of impedimenta; servants, Burmese, Kachins and natives, lunch boxes, cartridges, guns and a Mauser rifle; for though we were going for snipe the country we were to go through holds all sorts

of big game, though the chance of our seeing any was remote as the jungle is dense and covers great areas.

A quarter of a mile across the exposed sand of the river bed brought us to the canoes in which we were to cross. Our elephant swam, or waded, across higher up. We divided our party into two, and we crossed in the dug-outs. These are graceful long canoes, cut from a teak tree trunk, with a fine smooth surface and with a suggestion about them of being easy to roll over; bamboos lashed alongside steadied them, and allowed our Kachin and Burman to walk along the side when poling. We made use of a slack water on our side, and another behind a sandy reed-covered island half-way across to make up our leeway. Silvery fish were jumping, pursued by some larger fish, and C. and I laid plans to try harling for them after the Shannon or Namsen fashion. On the far side we got all our baggage made fast to the sides of the pad—a sort of mattress on the elephant's back—as it knelt on the shore, and on the top of the pad we stretched ourselves



and held on to the ropes as the elephant heaved up. Quite a string of men tailed out behind us over the sands with cartridge bags, and gun cases on their shoulders. On the bank we found a Burman guide at a little village beside a small white pagoda. There were yellow-robed

priests walking in the groves of trees and palms, and they noticed us I daresay, but made no sign that to their way of thinking we were doing harm to ourselves by going to kill snipe—the Phoungyi does not judge.

We then entered the kaing grass of which we had seen so much from the steamer and realised the difficulty of getting at game in this country. For miles we rode along a narrow path and these reeds were high over our heads, and as we sat we were about ten or eleven feet from the ground !¹ Tiger, gaur, deer, elephant and many other kinds of big game were all in this jungly country which extends for miles, so getting a shot at any of them is a good deal a matter of luck, or time. I expect it was lucky that we did not see anything but the tracks of these beasts, for I think my companion would have tried his small bore at anything. We had a certain anxiety about Gaur, miscalled Bison, for our steed had been badly gored by one—its hind quarters showed the scars—and it was warranted to bolt when it winded them, in which event we would probably have got left, as the reeds and branches would have cleared us off the pad. For five miles we followed the lane in the grass, and passed two Burmans, midway, carrying fruit ; they dodged into the reed stems and let us pass and laughingly admitted they were afraid. Here and there we came to a place where we could see over the top of the savannah for a mile or two and expected to spot deer or elephant in the park-like scenery, till we remembered the depth of the grass.

The slow action of our steed made me think we were getting only slowly over the ground, but I noticed the men behind had pretty hard walking to keep up with us. After an hour or so, we turned off the path and trod down a road for ourselves through the reeds, and came to jungle of trees and undergrowth, with heavy foliaged creepers growing up the trees and from branch to branch, and air

¹ Col. Pollock says the grass of these savannahs runs from ten to thirty feet high—“Wild Sports of Burmah and Assam.”

roots hanging from aloft, straight as bell ropes—up and down—into creeks, below undergrowth and out into the open again ; the elephant being judge of where the ground would bear us, gingerly putting out its great tender feet, sinking deep into mud, making us cling on to the back stays of the pad, then dragging its feet out of the soft mud with a loud sucking sound, leaving great holes slowly filling up with black water. When a tree stump came in our path he would very deliberately crush it down with a rending sound, or if a big branch barred our way, up came the great trunk and slowly folded round it, and down it came with a crash and was bent under foot. Sometimes a branch was too thick and strong : then the mahout drew his dah, gave three or four chops within the width of an inch—the elephant waiting meantime—when up would come the trunk again, and down went the timber. These Kachin dahs must be well tempered¹ and have a fine edge, for our mahout cut filmy creepers hanging lightly as a hair, as easily as thick branches.

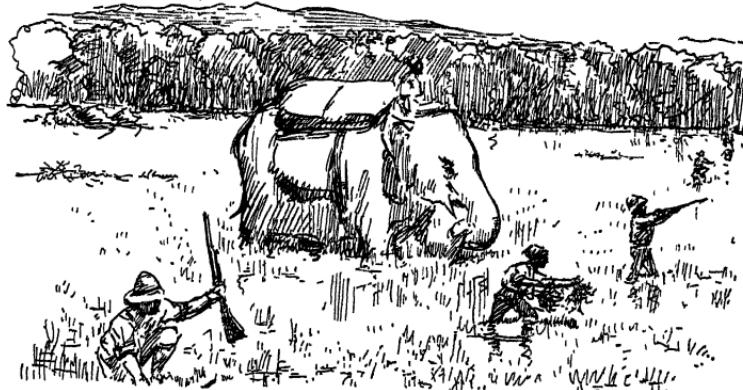
About ten we got to the jheel ; a swamp in an open space of about sixty acres, of water and grass ; of a fresh green, surrounded by low woods. Fresh tracks of sambhur and other deer were round it and signs of tiger ; so much big game had passed that there were deeply worn paths. I've no doubt that by waiting there, one could have had a shot at big game before long. It made me wish, with all my heart, for time and my 450 cordite express, and I half decided to send for it to Rangoon. Snipe was our hope in the meantime, so we got off some clothes and plunged into the marsh and up got snipe at our first step, and we brought down three, and thought we were in for a great bag. But there was rather too much water ; as we went on it came well over our knees, and every now and then up the tops of our thighs so there was too little holding ground for us or snipe. We walked in line, laboriously,

¹ I noticed later they were not ground to an edge, but shaved with steel spoke-shave.

halting every now and then to wait for one or the other to flounder out of a deep place ; and when the sun got up the glare from the water made me think of sunstroke ; however, we persevered and managed to get fourteen couple before lunch time, and I found my American five-shooter the very thing for the work.

How I wish I had known of there being such good snipe shooting at Mandalay, I would certainly have had a go at it there : I think 120 couple was a recent bag to one gun in twenty-four hours.

It was very odd having the elephant walking after us, it seemed so much at home ; with his length and number of legs, it could walk slowly but comfortably where we bipeds had to struggle. As it went it twisted its trunk round bunches of the water grass, tore them out of the water and swished the mud off the roots by beating it to and fro across its forelegs till it was clean, and then she stowed it down her mouth, bunch after bunch—what



an enormous quantity of food they must swallow ! The mahout on its back was in a good place to mark down dead birds ; if it had been taught to point and retrieve, it would have been even more useful.

The walking was very tiring, one leg on firm ground and the other up to the top of the thigh in mud and water for one second, and vice versa the next ; and the

trees kept any breeze there was off the jheel, so we streamed from the tops of our heads. I don't think I ever in my life felt so hot when shooting—or a bottle of lager at lunch so delicious!—even the rough native cheroot came in as a pure joy!

The elephant stood beside us as we lunched, under the trees, flapping its ears in the shade, and occasionally adding a branch of a tree to its morning meal. The sunlight and patches of shadow on its grey skin made its great bulk blend into the background of stems and deep shadows, so that I understood what hunters say about the difficulty of seeing them in heavy jungle: it was as hard to see as an elk in pines. I wondered why it did not join its wild companions in the neighbourhood; for it was, once wild, and there was nothing to prevent it going off if it pleased.

After lunch we decided to try for duck; that turned out a failure, but not for anything would I have missed the experience of wandering through jungle, where, without an elephant, we could not have moved. I am glad I am not yet very keen about orchids, or how my teeth would have watered! for they clothed the branches above us; they seemed generally to grow on branches about twenty or thirty feet from the ground, towards the light and air; some trees were literally covered with them at that height.

Our men we had to leave behind, as there was no track, and the Burman guide climbed up the crupper beside us, and we wandered away to some pools he knew, where there might be duck. I think we dozed a little—it was so hot and silent in the forest. There was a feeling of being lost, for there were no landmarks in the interminable beauty of tall trees and undergrowth. It was a puzzle for the mahout and elephant to find openings wide enough to take us and the side boxes on the pad through the tangle. Often a wrong direction was taken, and a circuit had to be made to get round a tree, a mass of creepers, or a deep pool. Both the Burman and the elephant seemed to calculate, to a hair's breadth, the height and width of all

it carried. I think the corner of one box only once touched a branch, and when we lay low no branches touched our heads; either the Burman's dah or the elephant's trunk cleared them off us.

The first pool was lit by a golden shaft of light through the greenery, rising fish were breaking its smooth weedy surface, but duck there were none; so we plunged on in the silence in another direction, came out into the kaing grass again, left the comparatively open forest behind us, and entered a trackless sea of reeds, which closed round us thickly on all sides.

The elephant surged through this steadily, waving its trunk in front, then pressing the reeds to right and left, or raising it high, and pulling down masses that threatened

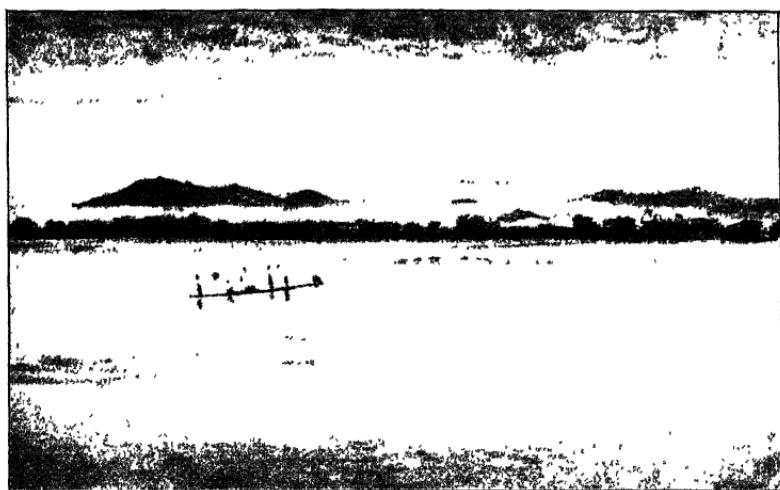


to sweep us off the pad. The dust and the heat of the sun overhead, and the monotony of the surging sound was a little oppressive.—It reminded me of moments long ago, in smaller reeds, and a small boy hunting duck round a loch in Perthshire; the stuffy, closed-in feeling, the crashing of the reeds, and the silence when you stopped to listen. Here we paused too, now and again, and the Burman stood up on the pad and tried to get our bearings. We got pretty well lost, I believe: Then on we went, the huge beast

crushing through the endless savannahs, as at home in its reeds as a liner surging through pathless seas. The motion and sound kept going all night in my dreams, the slow rolling of vast bones and muscles under the pad, and the crash of the reeds giving way, and the swish as they closed behind us. Here, as in the jungle, pretty blue convolvuli twisted up dead reeds nearly to our level, and peeped up at the sun. When we finally struck the long-sought for pools there were no duck, leastwise, but two, and some snake-birds, as they call a cormorant here that has a neck like an *S*. Round the edges the grass had been regularly grazed, so I'd bet on a shot there for one who could wait, but, apart from the shot, what would one not give for the pleasure of watching some of Burmah's beasts in their natural state. We were both a little tired by the time we got back in the afternoon to the path to the river, and an hour or two after, when we crossed the sands, and slid off our elephant's back at the river's edge, we had to take kinks out of our lower extremities, and even our elephant seemed very exhausted as it stood in the shallows, and slowly lifted water in its trunk and squirted it into its mouth. She and her mahout lodged the night on the far side.

As we crossed the river in our canoes, the sun was setting, and Carter said, "Isn't this like the West Highlands?" I had been thinking the same, almost admitting to myself that this country is perhaps as beautiful—certainly to the sportsman who neither rents nor owns lands at home, it must be out and away better. The view from his window in the Fort to the west was splendid. The Military Police Bungalow is on the top of the river bank, and beneath us stretched the sands, and the river reflecting violet and gold from the after-glow; then the rolling woods and the distant Chin hills, in purple and red, against the sunset, with one tall rain-column, very slowly passing across the yellow sky. Swing a branch of a heavy-leaved tree across the top of the wide window in Japanesque arrangement, put two men, two pipes, and two

pegs in the foreground, the rising bubbles sparkling yellow in the level sunset rays, and the pipe's incense ascending in blue perpendiculairs, and you have a suggestion of the perfect peace and entire absence of bustle which we associate with a certain Valley of Pong.



It made "trop de chose," to quote the great Carolus, to go out to dinner after such a full day, but the occasion was somewhat important; General Macleod and Mrs Macleod and his staff were to be entertained at the Military Police Mess.

The dinner was beautifully done, flowers and menu could not have possibly been better, though the party was not large, only our two hosts of the Military Police, the General and his wife, and his aide-de-camp, and G. and myself. I learned afterwards the A.D.C. had charmed G. with tales of the dangers of crossing into China without escort and permits.

We had a great entertainment or Pwé after. We took out cigars and chairs outside, and sat in a half circle in moonlight and shadow. In front of us was a space of silvery grey sand, the stage we will call it; at the back of

the scene was a sentinel's box on the stage right, to the left the lower part of a tree, and, between these, a low breastwork of earth, all in shadow against a moonlit distance of mist, and woods and mountains. Enter left (spectators right), the supers from shade of trees, carrying lamps, they are Indian soldiers, Sikhs possibly, in mufti, you cannot distinguish them easily, they sit in shadow, two deep round the back of the stage on the ground and low breastwork, the lamps at intervals on the ground throw up a little warm light on their faces: the hubble-bubble is lit, and goes round from hand to hand, and the smoke of the tobacco hangs a little.

Enter left, dancers and musicians slowly, with shuffling steps. The quiet is broken by a note on a gong, struck softly, and there is an almost inaudible flute melody on reeds, and liquid notes struck on empty bamboos. These dusky figures are Kachin men, with red turbans, and short, white, very loose kilts and bolero jackets. Some of the reflected light from the sand shows their curious, serious, boyish faces. They are short, but well-knit; they dance in a slow figure in a line, hand in hand, the bare feet shuffling with a little sound in the dust. The music is very faint, but you long to be able to remember the uncommon air that seems to have caught the quiet of the hills, and the depths of the bamboo woods.

These Kachin players are natives of the mountains here, and to the north. They are being brought into order, and indeed, a number are enlisting in the Military Police. Till recently, they were free, wild mountaineers, doing a little farming and raiding and vendetta business.

They went off, and came back from the deep shadows of the trees with glittering swords and more strident music, and louder beating on gongs, and harsher notes on chanters, and a loud booming sound on a narrow, six-foot-six drum with bell-shaped mouth; and the figures danced quickly, going backwards, in circles, and breaking into groups, the swords whirling and flickering beautifully in the moonlight,

and the audience clapped hands gently in time, and there was an occasional heugh! as used to be the way in our Highland Reel, before the invention of the—lowlander, the screaming “eightsome.”

I wish I remembered more of the Pwé—how I wish I could see it over and over again, till I could remember part of one of these quiet reedy tunes, so that I could recall this scene and the charm of Burmah whenever I pleased—for me, not even a scent, or colour, or form, can recall past scenes so vividly as a few notes of an air, the rythm of some folk-song—a few minor notes, an Alla—Allah, and you breathe the hot air of desert, and feel the monotony of black men, and sand, and sun—Thrum—thrum—thrum, and you are in the soft, busy night, in Spain, and again a few minor notes, strung together, perhaps, by Greig, in the Saeter, and you feel the scent of the pines in the valley rising to the snow—a concertina takes me back to warm golden sunsets in the dog watches in the Doldrums!—guess, I am fortunate receiving sweet suggestions from a concertina!

8th February.—Up in the morning very early, and went with the Algys to witness the Review of Captain Kirke's Kachin and Native Military Police before the General. Mrs Algy looked on from the Fort, and General Macleod and Captain Kirke stood at the saluting base, Mrs Macleod on a white pony behind, and Mr Algy of the Civil Police, and myself represented the B.P. The newly-recruited Kachins' marching and drill was perfection. Their rifles and bayonets they handled with precision, and as if they loved them. They are small men, but well shaped, not quite so bombé, but even more lithe-looking than Ghurkas, Captain K. says they are as good for hill-work; in fact, if it is possible, they are better! They stormed a village after the march past, which was a charming sight to see. The people in the village used black powder, so you could tell from what parts of the brown, sun-dried cane houses the shots came from. They took cover wonderfully, considering it was only sham fight, ran in in sections, generally aimed at something, and fired

without flinching, though they wore boots, which must have been a new and painful experience. I felt quite martial myself, and felt how excellent it must be to go fighting with some hundreds or thousands of lives to stake on an issue, and, so reflecting, my admiration increased for those private gentlemen at home, and in the Colonies, who went with only their own lives to Africa, for somebody else to stake.

In the evening the Officers came to the D.-C. Bungalow, and we had music, and drank to the health of our unknown host who is still in the hills, and Captain Kirke pencilled a route map for our ride into China.

CHAPTER XXXIV

YESTERDAY afternoon we did a little preparation for our trek into China. Mr Kohn, the storekeeper in Bhamo, imports to the East, the essentials of western civilization (in my opinion claret and cut Virginian) and the etceteras ; Cross and Blackwell things. And the West, he supplies with Shan swords and orchids, Kachin bags, ornaments in jade, gold and silver, and all sorts of curios. So we got bread from him for seven days, and tinned butter, milk, coffee, and a supply of the dried leaves of a certain aromatic shrub, for an infusion called Tea, also his Uisquebagh, and live ducks and hens in baskets, and six Chinese ponies, and three Chinamen—quite an extensive piece of shopping which took two hours at least.

. . . It is really very pleasant to feel we are actually going with our own mule train into the wilds, where even Cook's tickets and Empires peter out ; there is almost the same exciting feeling as of sailing into uncharted seas, and seeing new lands.

Our mule train cannot exactly be called interminable ; but we have four riding ponies to add to the live stock already mentioned, making a caravan of ten beasts. Besides the three Chinese men, there is our Madrassee boy, an Indian cook, in black top-coat and black Delhi cap ; he has a plain but honest face, and a stutter and a few words of English, and there is a youthful Burman to help him, and three Indian soldiers, Sowars, to ride behind our illustrious selves ! Quite an interesting crowd when you come to think of it, for its size and babel of tongues ! but, my certie ! I'd nearly left out the cook's charming

and stately Burmese wife! She is the most decorative part of the show; with a yellow orchid in her black hair, coppery-brown lungy, green-jacket and pink scarf floating from her shoulders; she carries a black gingham umbrella in one hand, and in the other, of course, a big white cheroot, and behind her toddles her dog, liver and white, half terrier, half daschhound.

We got our packages fast on the pack saddles, and the procession on the road only three hours after the time we had aimed at, which we thought not bad for beginners, and G. and I followed, in a pony trap, with the four ponies and two Sowars, her maid being left in the care of the American missionary's wife.

Out of Bhamo for some miles, the road is macadamised, broad level and straight, with grand columnar trees on either side, and leaves on its surface. Every mile or so you meet or pass groups of Kachins, Chinese or Shans, or people you can't quite place. They walk in Indian file as they are accustomed to in narrow hill and jungle paths. The Chinese men are without women and carry burdens, the Kachins carry their swords slung under the left arm, and their women carry their burdens. Some tribesmen have bows and arrows as well as swords. The Kachin woman's costume is of a pretty colour, a little dark velvet jacket with short sleeves, a kilt to the knee, and dark putties, both of woven colours like tartan, in diced and in herring-bone and running patterns. She carries the load in a narrow, finely-woven basket on her back, and her black hair is dressed after the fashion in Whitechapel. She is short with very strong calves. Her jaunty husband comes behind, with his red bonnet or turban cocked on one side, the sword and red tasselled bag hung from his left shoulder. The square Kachin bag or satchel is a pure joy of bright threads and patches and wonderful needlework, and is a little suggestive of a magnificent sporran. His expression is said to be sly, but I don't think so. His head is held straight on a longish neck for his size, his dark, slightly

oblique eyes are wide open and mildly startled looking—ditto his mouth, he is neater in figure than the Chinese, and does not look so heavy and potent. The top of his head is wide, his nose short and jaw and chin square but not deep.

As we drove through the fallen leaves and the shade on this fine road, the sun setting behind us lit up the tallest trees and branches in front of us in gold and green against the violet hills in the East. I scribbled figures in sketch-book and G. drove, and the syce sat behind with my gun handy. I also kept a corner of an eye lifting for jungle fowl, and by Jove! we were not two miles out when a hen ran across the road a hundred yards ahead and the sketches flew, and out came the gun; but instead of driving on and getting down when past as I ought—we stopped, and I went on, and when I came up to the place saw a cock scurrying along, and fired just as it got behind a bamboo clump, and I said—"tut, tut," and was very disappointed; as have been many men before me, by the same trifling miscarriage. It seemed a handsome little bird, a glowing bit of orange red colour. It's as fascinating as novel, the sensation of driving through country where you may see game at any time, and which all belongs to you and is gamekeepered by Government for you—it makes you feel a share of the country actually belongs to you.

I have read that you should get your terrier into the trap about this part of the road; the leopards have demonstrated this by collaring those that have followed the few white men's carriages that have driven along it. You may, see big game from it—I only saw pigs; they crossed the road, grey and bristly fellows, I'd swear they were wild, but I met Shans driving others in leash so like that now I am not quite sure.

It gets cold and dark as we get to the end of our drive, and we are glad to get down and into a rest-house of bamboo, built on trestles; it is like a pretty little shooting-box in the midst of shooting of measureless

extent. The moon shines on its thatch, and the lamp lit inside tells us our caravan has arrived before us. The



country is flat here, with fields and little jungle. We see the woods rising to the hills which we will reach to-morrow, and wisps of pungent smoke from a village near hang low across the fields. A few minutes walk brings us to where a smith works under a tall solitary tree; the smith, as usual, is brawny, and sparks fly up and bellows blow, and children blink at the glow just as they do elsewhere. The apprentice works the bellows, and at a nod from the smith pulls out the glowing metal, and the two thump away at it cheerily, and shove it back and heap up the charcoal, the bellows go again, and the smith has three whiffs at his pipe; it is a dah, or sword, they are making, welding one bit of iron after another into one piece.

We dine by candle light, and the moonlight comes through the hanging screen window and through the spaces between the planks of the floor, and our music is the distant ringing of the anvil, and the intermittent liquid notes of a Burmese reed instrument in the village.

After dinner, the mail, which we had not time to read yesterday, and our home news from the cold North-West. Two letters are from "The Grey City," both from authors, one with a word picture of that most dreary sight, our empty High Street on a Sunday morning, the poor people in their dens and the better class in St Giles; the other tells us that the "Boyhood of R. L. S." does well, as of course we knew it would; so we pass the evening pleasantly enough with thoughts of East and West, and friends here and there—even though that jungle fowl did get clean away.

CHAPTER XXXV

KALYCHET, 10th February.—It seems quite a long time since we were last night in the plains, in mist and haze and moonlight. It rained, and was very damp indeed during the night. Our slumbers were disturbed by a groaning, creaking, wooden-wheeled lowland train of carts, that seemed to suffer agony for ages—it went so slowly past and out of hearing ; perhaps it was the squeaking of the wheels that set all the cocks a-crowing. The more the wheels creak the better, for the Burman believes this creaking and whistling keeps away the “Nats” or spirits of things. The night seemed long and unrefreshing, and in the grey of the morning we found our blankets were wet with fog. But that was down below, now we are up on higher ground, and the air is drier and pleasant.

In early morning we drove in the pony cart half the way from Momouk to this Kalychet, the sowars riding behind with the four ponies. The road lay through green aisles of bamboo that met overhead, and it was cold and wet under them for some hours.

At mid-day we stopped and the syce went back with the pony cart, and I unpacked some fishing tackle to have a try for Mahseer on a river some distance beyond our halting place. I selected a rod from the million of bamboos round us, one of decent growth, not the longest, they ran to ninety feet at a guess, and fastened snake rings on with adhesive plaster from our medical stores, the stuff you get in rolls, an adaptation of a valuable tip from *The Field* ;¹

¹ An improvement on the splendid tip is to use the gummy tape used for insulating electric wire.

the tip was for mending rods, but it does as well, or better, for putting on temporary rings.

It was a grand river, what I'd call a small salmon river, tumbling into pools over great water-worn boulders, with a tangle of reeds and bamboos above flood mark. It was piping hot fishing, and the water seemed rather clear for the phantom I tried. I had two on for a second, and had a number of touches from small Mahseer that I saw following the minnow, but failed to land anything, so alas!—I can't swear I've caught a Mahseer yet or killed a jungle fowl—my two small ambitions just now. G. collected seeds and roots of wild plants to send home, so she had a better bag than I had. We rode back to our halting place to lunch—or tiffen, or whatever it's called in these parts—a sort of solid breakfast at one o'clock,—on the side of the pony track; the Chinese pack-ponies wandered round eating bamboo leaves and tough looking reeds. Along the road we passed many groups of Kachins, all with swords and mild wondering eyes. This halt was rather a business I thought,—all the packages unladen, pots and pans and fires, and a complicated lunch. I incline to our home fashion when living out of doors, of a crust and a drink at mid-day and a square meal after the day's outing.

As we were getting our cavalcade started, along came Captain Kirke and Carter in shirt-sleeves, riding back hard to Headquarters. They are hard as nails but looked just the least thing tired, having ridden a great distance since yesterday on an inspecting tour from some hill village. They hoped to get to Bhamo by night *if* their steeds held out.

For the rest of the day we rode, at first with our whole crew, latterly by ourselves and the two Sepoys—cantered a hundred yards or so and jog-trotted, ambled, walked, cantered again and climbed slowly up hillside paths; through damp hollows, between brakes of high reeds with beautiful fluffy seeds, under tall trees festooned

with creepers with lilac flowers, and over hard sunny bits of the path with butterflies floating up against us, and overhead, orchids and pendant air roots and wild fruits. I suppose it was the beautiful surroundings that made the ride so enjoyable, and the change from the plain to the hill air.

Towards evening we rode up a saddle ridge that crossed the valley along which we had been riding, and came out of trees and bamboos into the open. Here we found another pretty public-work's dak bungalow of dark teak uprights and cross beams, with white-washed cane matting between and neat grass thatch laid over bamboos, with wide views up and down the valley of rolling woods and distant hills. To the north-east a distant range of blue



hills cut across the valley, touches of sunlight showed they were covered with forest; below us the path led zig-zagging into the yellow and green bamboos. Looking back to the south down the valley we had come up, the Chin hills bounded the horizon, but between us and them lay miles and miles of rolling woods, and a haze at the foot of the hills over the plain of the Irrawaddy.

The air was delicious, the views entralling, the lodging comfortable, the country we might call our own, with no one about, except the native Durwan, or caretaker, and his Kachin women folk, only in the distance on a hillside were two Kachins clearing a patch of jungle—otherwise solitude and peace. Our ponies and baggage arrived all right but some time after us; it ought to have been looted if what recent writers say about the Kachins is right—that “they do no honest labour, but live by lifting cattle, looting caravans, and stealing anything upon which they can lay their hands.” Krishna and all the others set at once to unpack and get ready our meal, which felt rather late—I should have timed them to arrive before us. It grew chilly in the evening, and our red blankets soon seemed uncommonly attractive.

Sunday forenoon.—You might, if of a contemplative mind, and not harassed by desire for sport, or movement, or travel, stay for many hours, even days, with great content at this Kalychet bungalow, looking out over forest and glen, inhaling the pure air, and even run to poetry were you of the age.

“Watching shadows, shadows chasing,”

—over the forest-clad mountains which have only cleared patches here and there, where Kachins have cut the bamboos, taken a crop or two and then moved on, leaving the ground to lie fallow and grow over weeds again. On the hillside there are two of these clearings across the track above us, some two acres or so in extent, with the bamboos cut and stumps of trees projecting, and in the middle of one of these there is a native hut, like a fragile boat-house, projecting from the slope of the hill. Narrow footpaths through the bamboos lead from our cleared space up to them. Two little Kachin women are climbing up these paths, their cattle in front of them; each has a basket on her back, and she spins as she goes—now they are followed by a sprightly boy and his sister, the boy straight as a dart, with a sword slung across his back, and

his gay red-tasselled satchel on his left side; both have bare feet, and neither of them seem to heed the thorns. The girl has a loose bundle of thin hoops of brass and black cane round her hips, under her short black jacket,



and two great silver torques round her neck and breast; her clothes are dark blue, black, and red.

. . . There is the quiet of the mountains; only slightly

broken at intervals of an hour or so when a caravan passes, but sometimes these pass perfectly silently without stopping; barefooted carriers with their merchandise slung across the shoulder on bamboos, and sometimes with ponies, and bells jingling cheerily. Just now, one has come from the China frontier, some ten carriers wearing pointed straw hats several feet wide. They unlimber and drink a little water from a spring that spouts out of the side of a hill through a bamboo; they are quiet people—their voices and the gurgling of the spring just reach us. Then from Burmah side come women carriers, Shans, I think, old and young, in dark blue clothes, short petticoats and tall turbans; they come sturdily up the hill and joke with the Chinese coolies as they pass without



stopping down the zigzag path into the bamboos, by the path our ponies and people have already followed. But here is movement! and a cheery jingling!—a whole string of Chinese pack ponies, eighty at least, coming up from Bhamo, each laden with bales, a Chinaman to every three ponies. At the end stalks a lean Indian. I suppose he owns the show—his wife follows, a very black thing, a Madrassee, to judge by her not very white and inelegant hangings. They drink and spit at the spring, and he sees

us and salaams, and looks in to see the durwan, who is one of his countrymen.

But now we must be jogging too, though it is pleasant here. We leave one sowar behind, in pain he says, but I doubt if he's very ill. So we get on to our rather big polo ponies, one black, the other white, and go down the valley on the path to China—said bridle path quite dry now excepting under bamboo clumps, though it rained hard in the night.

7 p.m.—Kulon Cha—"There's no place like home" they say, and I thought so; now I think there is, perhaps even better. Our own highlands must have been like this before General Wade and Sir Walter Scott opened them to the tourist; the Pass of Leny or where Bran meets Tay, when there was more forest, and only bridle tracks, and men going armed, must have been like this, even to the free fishing and shooting.

We are in a cup-shaped wooden glen, our rest-house eighty feet up the hillside above the track, and a brawling burn that meets the Taiping a few hundred yards beyond our halting place. The burn suggests good fishing, and the Taiping looks like a magnificent salmon river. It is 7 p.m. and Krishna busy setting dinner, and your servant writing these notes to the sound of many waters and by a candle dimly burning, for the sun has gone below the wooded hills and left us in a soft gloom. Several camp fires begin to twinkle along the road where the caravans we overtook, and others from the east, are preparing for the night. Our Chinese coolies too have their fires going near us, the smoke helping to soften the already blurred evening effect. We have had, for us, a long afternoon's tide—a little tiring and hot in the bottom of the valley when the path came down to the Taiping river,—a winding and twisting path, round little glens to cross foaming burns, level enough for a hundred yards canter, then down, and up, hill sides in zigzags, here and there wet and muddy with uncertain footing, through groves of

bamboos and under splendid forest trees, some creepers hanging a hundred feet straight as plumb lines, others twisted like wrecked ships' cables, and flowering trees, with delicious scent every hundred yards or so. We felt



inclined to stop and look, and sketch vistas of sunlit foliage through shadowy aisles of feathery bamboos, or splendid open forest views with mighty trees, and the

river and its great salmon pools. There were splendid butterflies, some large and black as velvet, with a patch of vivid ultramarine, others yellow with cerulean, and another deep fig green with a blazing spot of primrose, and pigeons, and of course jungle fowl, because I had not my gun !

Our caravan arriving here was picturesque. They came round the corner over the burn bridge, walking briskly, the sick sowar riding in the rear, the cook and his Burmese wife leading—she so neat, with a pink scarf, green jacket, and plum-coloured silk skirt, her belongings in a handkerchief slung over her shoulder from a black cotton parasol, and in her left hand, carried straight as a saint's lilies, a branch of white flowers for G. ; then came the Burman youth, also with some bright colour, a red scarf round his black hair and tartan kilt ; he carried my gun, and the Chinamen in weather-worn blue dungarees, loose tunics and shorts, and wide yellow umbrella hats slung on their backs, with their shaggy brown and white ponies. We arrived at five, the mules and baggage at six, and already dinner is almost cooked, our belongings in place, beds made, mosquito curtains up,—and this day's journal done !

. . . Wish somebody would write this day's log for me—I must fish ! The burn in front is in grand spate, so is the Taiping river, roaring down discoloured. If I know aught of Highland spates, they will both be down in the hour and fishable. The glen is full of sun from behind us, and the mist is rising in lumps. It rained in the night ; when we turned in, the mist had come down in ridges on us, and it felt stuffy and warm under blankets, and the sound of the waters was muffled by the mist. I awoke with a world of vivid white light in my eyes, the glen was quivering with lightning, and the gods played awful bowls overhead ! Green trees up the hillsides and contorted mist wreaths showed as in daylight, and then were buried in blackness and thunder. Then the rain came ! to put it intil Scottis

—a snell showir' dirlin' on the thatch. There was the bleezin cairn, and the craig that lowped and dinnled i' the dead-mirk dail, the burn in spate and the rowin flood o' the Taiping dinging their looves thegither at their tryst i' the glen—ane gran' an' awesome melee. But I don't like these effects, so I buried myself in red blankets, and as the rain thundered down, thought of our coolies ; I expect they got from under their hats and went below the floor of our bungalow. The atmosphere, after an hour, grew suddenly pleasant and cool—a breeze rose—there was light in the left, and the glint of many stars—and I pulled on another blanket and slept at last refreshingly. What a night the Chinese up the road must have had. No jungle however thick could have kept out that rain, and it is thin where they are, for many campers have cut down the branches and bamboos for fodder and firewood. They sleep with only a piece of matting over their bodies, the wide straw hat over their head and shoulders ; and their fires, of course, were extinguished. The sort of thing our Volunteers enjoyed in S.A., and for which they got rheumatism and experience, and a medal, and no opportunity to wear it.

One of the sepoys has cut me a bamboo, so it's time to be off to put on snake-rings, and get out tackle and try somehow to hang on to one of these Mahseer that I have heard of so much and of which I know so little. Local information there is none, but I have spoons and phantoms, and so—who knows !

CHAPTER XXXVI



HE above notes and remarks, full of hope, were written with a little impatience to be "on the water." Now, after two hours scrambling through jungle to and from the river, I've less hope and an empty basket. It was hot and still down in the glen, like the vale wherein sat grey-haired Saturn, and—

"Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feathered
grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, their did it rest."

and fruit and flowers too lay sodden under foot. It was tough work getting through the few hundred yards of jungle of creeper thorns and boulders to the river's edge. I fished two or three sheltered runs, and came back soaking from within and without from the heat and wet foliage, scratched by thorns, with ears drumming from the noise of many waters, and no basket, and the river not down two inches and muddy as could be!

We must be off again now—or at least let the pack ponies and servants go.

12th, Monday.—Nampoung, after two hours on our little gees, two hours that seemed days! Hot and stuffy down in the glens in the din and roar of the Taiping in spate, climbing up for a thousand feet, a hundred yards on the level, twisting round corries—such fascinating corries,

stuffed with every sort of tropic growth, like the pictures one saw in stories of Jules Verne, but in such rich varied



colouring! I vow I saw creepers of two hundred feet, wild plantains with fruit, and great ferns, heavy-leaved dark foliage and feathery bamboos, the leaves yellow and dropping and covering our path with a crisp brown carpet.

We rode generally in single file, our right sides against rocks or cuttings in the yellow earth bank, and every here and there were views through the foliage, sometimes almost straight down below us a thousand feet, where we could catch a glimpse of foaming river and hear its roar coming up to us.



The sowars cut branches for us to hold over our shoulders to keep the heat of the afternoon sun off neck and back—Birnam woods *a deux*, and Nampoung fort instead of Macbeth's castle.

Nampoung—the edge of the Empire!—We are now well into the Kachin Highlands, 6000 to 7000 feet above the sea, and the air is delicious. The last part of our ride here was very steep. G. and her pony were only just able to scrape up together. I and the sepoys had to walk. Almost in the steepest part some sixty Chinese mules and ponies came down, and we pulled aside at a bit of the path where two could barely pass. It was a cheery sight, the long line of ponies and the blue coats and mushroom hats, jogging, slipping, and jangling down the zigzag path, with an occasional cheery shout to the beasts as they dis-

appeared round corners, appeared again, and finally showed a mile below, when only the sound of their bells came up to us faintly from the tropic woods in the bottom of the Nampoung Valley.

I am not sure that having reached a point within pistol-shot of the back of China fills one with any enormous sense of accomplished endeavour. What strikes me mildly is the feeling of being at the present extremity of British possessions, and we speculate where the March may be in years to come—East or West? The tiny little frontier fort we have arrived at is on a saddle-back hill, and overlooks the angle of China between two valleys, that of the Taiping and its tributary, the Nampoung. As we passed through the wire entanglements on the summit, after our climb up, the Indian sentinel facing China across the glen struck me as being rather a suggestive figure, so here he is.

“Capin Kurruk” was our effective password. Kirke I suppose, had heliographed our arrival, and the Subadar and the native doctor met us. The Subadar, a Sikh, I think, had almost the only Indian face I have seen so far that I liked—big, potent, and with the appearance of a sportsman and gentleman. The doctor was of rather an opposite type, though clever-looking, and spoke a little English.

The dark bungalow was a few hundred yards down the hill from the fort looking down the valley we had come up into the sunset. On these higher hills I see more Kachin clearings, and with the glass make out their sturdy little figures in the tracks leading from one clearing to the other, interminable bamboo jungle above and below them. They certainly have a splendid country to hold. They are said to have come into Burmah with the great Mogul invasion; and when the Northerners retreated, the Kachins



stayed and took up their quarters in the hill tops, and have raided the low countries since.

The cut of their women's dress resembles the reindeer skin dress of the Laps in north of Norway, and the geometric ornaments are similar, and the torque or heavy penanular necklet of silver has ends like the druidical serpents head.

12th February.—Down at Kulong Cha the night was warm and stuffy! last night up here at Nampoung it was precious cold. We could hardly sleep, though we had on our whole wardrobe. The weak point was our having only two thin quilts underneath on the charpoys. As these bungalows are all made after one design on the principle of a meat-safe, to keep you cool in the low hot levels, they are only too effective up here. So we turned out very early to find a spot where the sun shone hot on the Empire's wall. In an hour or two we will be down to the Nampoung River, and it will be hot there as an oven.

CHAPTER XXXVII

LIVES there a man who has sat by the riverside at mid-day in the glen, with a pipe and a cup, and a fish in the bag, the air hot and full of the sound of running waters, and the sun laughing in the spirals of the mountain dew, who has not felt that beautiful life could offer nothing better than another fish? (I'd have brought a "man or woman" into this already involved interrogatory sentence, but for the pipe!) So we feel, as we rest by the side of Nampoung River, between China and Upper Burmah, after a morning's ride and an hour's fishing. There is a delicious blend of wood, and hill, and running water, and we have a good Mahseer in the bag—or pot rather—a perfect beauty, though not quite up to the record weights we read of; but it played handsomely, and it comes in handily for lunch. I got it at the tail of a lovely clear running pool,¹ just above the ford where the caravans cross from China. The river must be much netted by the coolies who camp for the night here; as I wound up before lunch one of these, a Chinaman, with a boy came and cast a circular net with great skill over half the pool in which I'd landed the Mahseer, but they didn't get anything, as I expect I'd driven the Mahseer into the rough water at the top of the pool. Down the river where it meets the Taiping I am told there is splendid fishing, but I must content myself with the hope that "a time will come." It is pleasant in the meantime; there are sweet scents in the air, and pleasant colours. Our little camp kitchen, one hundred yards down the river, wreaths the trees with wisps of blue smoke. The Burmese girl and her brother

¹ Fresh food a treat, as larder is becoming "tinny."

wear bright red and white, and near us there are wild capsicums and lemon trees dangling all over with yellow fruit and sweet-scented blossoms. The fruit has rather a coarse skin, but the juice is pleasant enough under the circumstances.

How good the Mahseer was fried, with a touch of lemon! I daresay if it had been big enough to feed all hands it would not have had such a delicate flavour; it was rather like fresh herring. If our servants hadn't much fish, I at least, helped their larder to a crow from a swaying bough above us some forty odd yards—brought it down with a four-inch barrelled Browning's colt. It and its comrades made a racket above us, and disturbed a nap G. and I were having on the bank up the river from our camp, so I drew as I lay and fired, and was fairly well pleased with the shot; but the smiles and astonishment of some Chinese and Kachins, who had gathered from I don't know where, and were very unexpectedly showing their heads round us, were truly delightful, and the feathers were off in a twinkling. I liked these aborigines' expressions after the shot a good deal better than before.

Then we got up and went on to China, G. on her white pony, the writer on foot, and when we came to the ford the pony wouldn't face the stream for love or a stick, so I'd to carry G. pick-a-back, and it took me to the thick of the thigh and G. well over her ankles. We walked three steps on Chinese ground and stopped, and looked at the Chinese riff-raff soldiery that turned out from a cane house, and they likewise looked at us. As they offered no signs of welcome, we began our homeward journey, took a breath, said a prayer, and "hold tight," and waded back. These guards, I am told, lose their heads if they allow anyone to pass without a permit; we did not have one, so I can quite well understand their expressions. G. knew this before we crossed, but I did not, so I reflect. I do not suppose we could have forded sooner as the river was falling; a

few hours later, it could have been crossed with less difficulty.

So we got back to our ponies again, and followed our baggage jogging back down from China, in and out, and up and down the valleys; and it was just as nice as jogging up: we were glad to see the scenes of wood and valley and foaming rivers over again from new points of view.

At Kulong Cha, we stopped the night in the Glen of the Sound of Many Waters. A leopard called on us in the night—came into the back verandah with a velvety thud, and so we each turned out with our Browning revolvers, and when we met with candles dimly burning, each said we “heard a rat!” It probably was in search of the terrier of the Burmese wife of our native cook; but it did not succeed in the quest. Terriers’ lives here are short and full of sport, and leopards love them. What an adventuresome day—Bag one crow—one Mahseer.

The desperate play of the Mahseer and our adventure into China had tired us, so that we left Kulong Cha late, after a “European breakfast”; which is to say, a breakfast at or about nine, and rode with much pleasure till lunch time. Then fell in with our servants, camped in flickering shadows under bamboos beside the yellow surging Taiping, the fire going and the air redolent with an appetising smell of roast duck; our last dear duck, whose fellow ducks and hens had accompanied us in the baskets at either end of a pole across a coolie’s back from Bhamo.

In less than fifteen minutes by the watch, we had a rod cut, salmon reel attached and rings put on with the invaluable plaster, and all ready for underhand casting. I fished the most magnificent-looking salmon pool; there were fresh leopard tracks on a bank of sand beside it, and G. and the Burmese woman made a great collection of orchids and bulbs, and ants and stinging beasts as they climbed the trees. But alas, I got only one fish, and it was no beauty! I rather think the Taiping water is too discoloured and sandy for Mahseer.

If the ride in the morning was pleasant, that in the afternoon and evening was even more so. As we came down the glens to Kalychet, the gold of the evening faded in



front of us, and left us in soft sweetly-scented darkness. The fire-flies lit up, and their little golden lamps flickering alongside through the intricacies of the dark bamboo stems helped to show us the track.

How tired we were when we at last reached the rest-house: tired of the delight of the day and the difficulty of riding in the dark. It blew a little during the night and grew cold, but we thought of the heat of the day and made belief that we were very snug, though the wind did play freely through the open floor and cane walls.

From Kalychet to Momouk in the sun in the morning was perhaps our most enjoyable ride, such heat, and light, and exhilarating air, the air of Norway with southern colour. Butterflies, huge black fellows with dazzling blue patches, fluttered off the sandy bits of road, their shadows blacker than themselves, the ponies' feet crackled the great hard teak leaves. Out of forest and creepers into bamboo

thickets; then into glades with flowering kaing grass and wild fruit, redder than tomatoes, hanging from creeping plants; across slender wooden bridges, over roaring streams, always getting lower till the path came out on the plains again on the wide macadamised road.

. . . It was rather sad getting on to the plain again. We left our hearts in the Kachin Highlands, and thought, with a little melancholy, how long it would be before we breathed clean hill air again.

Our train got a little disorganised getting into Momouk, the pack-ponies' backs were the worse of wear, and our Boy had fallen out with sore feet—the poor fellow had been working up to his collar. He crept in hours after the others and collapsed, his bare soles cracked and legs in pain. Silly fellow won't wear shoes for some caste or religious superstition; he is more fitted for his clerks work than for tramping. I held his pulse and tried to look as if I knew what to do with a sick Hindoo, tucked him up in his blanket under the bungalow and left him in charge of the native Durwan, and arranged to send out a conveyance for him on the morrow from Bhamo.

Then we took the hard high road again in the pony cart, and it felt very hum-drum trundling along on wheels on the straight level road across the plain. Groups of Kachins passed us going homewards to the high ground we had left, and we envied them; for hills are elevating and plains depressing, whatever Shopenhaur or the Fleet Street philosopher may have said to the contrary.

As the evening came on, we passed the Mission House, and the cemetery, and the Dak bungalow and the Club, pretty nearly all there is of European interest in Bhamo, excepting the Fort, and pulled up at the Deputy-Commissioner's Bungalow. The D.C., Mr Leveson, was at home this time, and gave us a very hospitable welcome.

. . . The military police officers to dinner. The conversation mostly on sport; what constitutes a "good snipe shot," what may be called a "good bag of snipe," and the

many ramifications of these subjects. Then music, our host singing, "When Sparrows Build," and Kirke sang and played his own "Farewell to Burmah," of which both music and words expressed the very essence of the charm of this country, and a little of the sweet sadness there is in glens and rivers, and of the peace of evening when the kaing grass is still and the white ibis and crows flight home across the broad river into the sunset. You who know the song of Dierdre of Naoise, fairest of the sons of Uisneach, and the charms of each glen she sings of in Alba—you will know the quality I mean: . . .

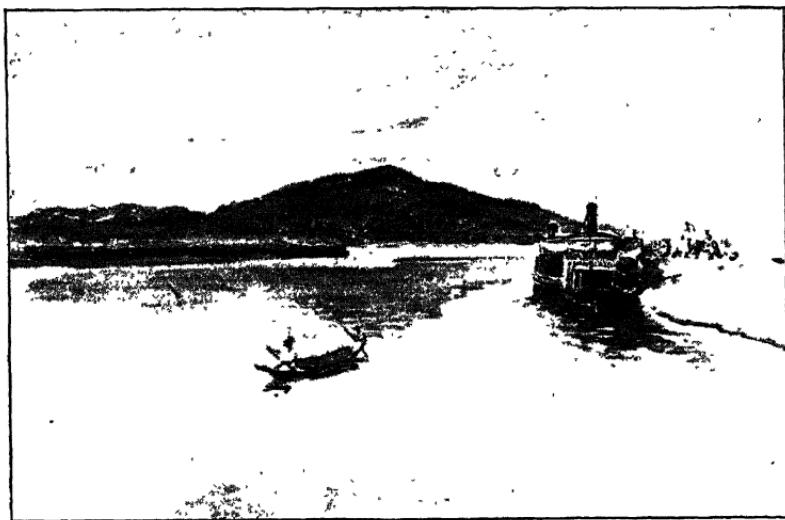
"Beloved, the water o'er pure sand,
Oh, that I might not part from the East,
But that I go with my Beloved."

I think Percy Smith was strongest at coon songs, and Trail sang all sorts, and G. and Kirke played accompani-



ments, whilst the writer picked out his own to a chantie respecting the procedure to be taken with an inebriated

mariner—such a merry evening!—the best of which, to me, was the jolly rattle of witty talk of these youthful administrators, the oldest, if you please, well under thirty, talking of the other soldier men as boys. We finished our concert at one, and the young soldiers had to get home, and start up the river before daybreak for warlike manœuvres—(or polo?) at Myitkyna, 140 miles north-west of Bhamo; there will be a jolly reunion I gather, of men who have been for long months keeping watch and ward from their lonely mountain eyries o'er the furthest marches of the British Empire!



17th February.—I vow that there is this morning, at the same time, a suggestion in the air of both spring and autumn. There is a touch of autumn grey, and the plants in the garden droop a little as they do at home before or after frost. A level line of cloud rests half-way up the steel blue hills, it has hung there motionless for hours since the sun rose, and the air is very pure, with a sweet scent of stephanotis and wood-smoke and roses. Possibly it is the stephanotis and the wood-smoke com-

bined that makes me think of spring—spring in Paris; but more probably Paris is brought to my mind this morning by the interview we had yesterday with M. Ava about our berths on the cargo boat down to Mandalay; he is the Bhamo Agent for the Flotilla Company. M. Ava left Paris at the time of the birth of the Prince Imperial, and came to Burmah with his own yacht, and has stayed here ever since. I wish he would write a book on the changes of life he has seen; about the court life of the Empire, and his semi-official yachting tour, and of his long residence with Thebaw and his queens, of the intrigue and ceremonies in their golden palaces, the thrilling episodes of which he was witness, and of the many changes of fortune he has himself experienced.

. . . Someone said last night, "How interesting it would be if an artist were to paint the various types of the tribes here, and my conscience smote me for not seizing the occasion. So to-day I got my Boy to ask the native cook, to ask his Burmese wife, to ask her Kachin female assistant to pose for me, and here she is. Isn't she sweet? —and seventeen, she says, and she is so shy!—and has a queer, queer look in the back of her narrow eyes that I'd fain be able to translate; perhaps there's a little pride of race, and perhaps a little of the timidity of a wild thing from the jungle—perhaps all the histories of old Mongol invasions and retreats if we could but read! Her dress is rather rich, jacket black velvet, edged with red, tall turban of blue frieze cloth, and kilt and putties of the colours of low-toned tartan made of hand-woven cloth, in diced and herring-boned patterns. She has a silver torque round her neck of the druidical shape, the ends of the circle almost meeting, and bent back with two shapes like flat serpents' heads. In her ears are silver ornaments the size and shape of Manilla cheroots, enamelled and tasselled with red silk. As I drew her, the rest of Mr Leveson's domestics, Burmese and native, sat round on the lawn and helped by looking on, and were greatly



delighted in seeing the buxom beauty reproduced in colour on paper.

A Burmese matron then came along with her daughter to sell two silver swords with ivory handles, and I got the swords, and a sitting of a few minutes from the daughter, and here she is : a fairly average Burmese girl, but not nearly one of the prettiest. The green broadcloth jacket you see up here frequently, but further south the girls all wore thin white jackets. As I painted, G. and the servants packed orchids, box after box—I must be at my packing too ; leopards' skins, and Kachin and silver-mounted Shan dahs are my most interesting trophies.

Dined with the Algys of the Civil Police force—Captain Massey there, a pleasant bungalow, a wealth of roses on the table, heavy red curtains against white and pale blue plastered walls ; a wood fire and lots of open air and music, and talk of sport and big game. I am asked to a great drive of geese, sambhur, and syn, but cannot accept for want of time—was there ever anything more annoying !

19th February.—Good-bye, sweet Bhamo. You weep, and we weep ; but we go with a hope we may return.

How it pours ! The Chinese ponies on the sandbank huddle together. A Burmese lady goes up the bank to loosen the painter of her canoe ; she wears a pink silk skirt and white jacket, and carries a yellow paper umbrella and apparently thinks little of the downpour. I've noticed heaps of these pretty oiled paper umbrellas in the bazaars, I suppose being prepared for this kind of weather. Even in pouring wet, Bhamo is beautiful. Good-bye again ; we will tell our friends at home that there is such a desirable quiet country on this side of Heaven, where the mansions truly are few, but the hosts are very kind.

Now we let go our wire rope from the red and black timber head in the sand, slip away quietly into the current

and leave the sandbank to the Chinese ponies and a few bales of cotton, all in the dripping rain.

The kaing grass is drooping with the downpour, but it will be dry as tinder in an hour or two, dry on the top at least.

Now, great Irrawaddy—take us safely down your length, and preserve us from sandbanks and let us spend some more hours on your lovely banks; and we will go down with your rafts of bamboos, and teak, and pottery, and canoes, and we will avoid all trains till you fraternise with old ocean again in Rangoon river. Then we will bid you good-bye, it may be for years, but we hope not for ever.

. . . At Katha again. The wet pigeon-grey sky lifting, the river the colour of the Seine. The decorative fig and cotton trees have leaves just budding, and through the grey stems of the leafless Champaks with wax white flowers we see groups of figures in dainty colours in the quiet light, and of course there is the glint of white and gold of a pagoda.

. . . In the morning we woke early and drank in the beauty of the clouds lifting off the river and floating up the corries in the distant hills. We did not awake early intentionally; the wet mist in the night tautened the cord of the fog horn, and when the steam pressure rose, off it went loud and long enough to waken seventy sleepers.

. . . We pass villages quickly on our way down. We have a flat on either side, but there is only a half-hearted bazaar in one, and the other is empty, so we can use it as our promenade.

By lunch time the sky had all cleared into a froth of sunshine and blue and white clouds. The sand and distant forest and hills became well nigh invisible in the bright light, and the river seemed a shield of some fine metal, that took all the sky and smoothed it and reflected it with concentrated glitter. For our foreground we have the white table on deck in shade, with a heap of roses



and white orchids in a silver bowl; the fallen petals blend into the half-tone of the table cloth, and there's peace and quiet and sleep, to the pulsation of the paddles and the hissing of the foaming water passing astern.

At Tayoung in the evening we swing round, head up stream, and lie along the shore—too late to go shooting, so we put on a cast of flies and cast over rising fish, and get a dozen very pretty fish in half-an-hour. I confess I put a tiny piece of meat on each fly, but hardly enough to call it bait fishing. These were all silvery, "butter fish," excepting one, which was rather like a herring. Meantime we had the heavy sunk line baited with dough, and by and bye it began to go out into the stream, and we paid out line rapidly, and then suddenly hauled taut and were fast to a "big un." It was pull devil, pull baker for about five to ten minutes, when the big fish came alongside, and we got a noose round its tail and hauled it on board. It weighed twenty-eight lbs!

... The 22nd.—I think, but who can tell?—for each glorious hot day is as monotonously beautiful as the day before; all bright and shining, the blue and white sky reflected in the endless silky riband of the river down which we steadily paddle, between silver strands and bowery woods, stopping only for the night, and possibly for an hour or two in the day, when we go ashore to sketch, or sometimes to shoot.

I have been trying to make up my mind which of two perfect days' shooting was the best. This afternoon's shoot and tramp through the jungle—Bag, my first brace francolin, to my own gun, or a day last year in stubble and turnips, and twenty-five brace partridges to my own gun and black pointer. I think the jungle day has it, though the bag was so small, by virtue of its beauty, as against the trim fields of the Lothians.

We started together, G. and her maid to collect seeds

and roots and orchids, and I wandered on to shoot with a Burmese guide.

Some of the tall trees have shed their leaves, and are now a mass of blossom. One high tree had dropped a mat of purple flowers, as large as tulips, across the dried grass and brown leaves at its foot. Another tree with silvery bark had every leafless branch ablaze with orange vermillion flowers. "Fire of the Forest," or "Flame of Forest," I heard it called in India,—its colour so dazzling, you see everything grey for seconds after looking at it. Then there were brakes of flowering shrubs like tobacco plants with starlike white flowers, and the scent of orange blossom; and others with velvety petals of heliotrope tint, and masses of creepers with flowers like myrtle, and a fresh scent of violets and daisies—the air so pure and pleasant that each scent came to one separately; and, as the most of the foliage is dry and thin just now, these flowers and green bushes were the more effective. Certainly the surroundings were more beautiful than those we have in low ground shooting at home, and the smallness of the bag was balanced by this, and the delightfully unfamiliar sensation of both shooting and right-of-way, being free to you or your neighbour.

With a shade of luck, I'd have had quite a decent bag; but you know how some days things just miss the bag—you can't exactly tell why—so it was this afternoon; there should have been two hares, and two quail, and two birds that seemed very like pheasants. One fell in impenetrable thorns, and we could not get nearer than about ten yards, and I missed another sitting. To restore my reputation with the Burmese boy, I had to claw down some high pigeons from untold heights on their way home to roost. After this, as I was loading, a partridge got up from some stubbly grass in a clearing, with an astonishingly familiar whirr, and went clear away, and I'd barely loaded when a Button quail whipped over some bushes, and it dropped, but in impenetrable thorns! I'd not heard of Burmese partridges,

but the flight and whirr were unmistakeable, though the bird was larger than those at home. So we went on, longing for the company of my silky, black-coated pointer Flo, and a couple of hardy mongrel spaniels—together we would soon have filled the bag! . . . It is such fun going through new country, without a ghost of an idea which direction to take or what method to pursue, or what game to expect.

At the next cleared space we came to, two birds, mightily like pheasants, were feeding on some ground that had once been tilled, so, by signs to the Burmese boy (he cleans the knives on board) I easily made him understand he was to drive them over me, and we each made a circuit, he round the open, the gun behind a brake of dog roses and plantains, and the birds came over with rather too uncertain flight for pheasants. I got one, and the other fell far into thorns, but they were, after all, only a large kind of magpie, but with regular gamey-brown wings, blue-black heads, and long tails that gave them on the ground a passing resemblance to pheasants. The next open space seemed absolutely suited for partridges, and, as we walked into the middle, up got two and came down to quite a conventional right and left, and our glee was unbounded when we found them in the dried grass. The colours of their plumage was handsome, not quite so sober as that of our partridge at home, and their size and shape was almost between that of a grouse and a partridge; Francolin,¹ I've since heard they were. Two hares I just got a glimpse of, greyish in colour, and very thin-looking beasts. Then the sun got low, and we heard deer barking in knolly ground, and would fain have sat the evening out quietly, and waited, and watched the night life of the jungle.

It was dark when we made for the river and the soft, dusty track through the green grass at its edge. Big beetles passed us humming, and we met some children with lamps swinging, and they sang as they went, to keep away the Nats or spirits of things.

¹ There is not a specimen quite like them in S. Kensington.

Our steamer looked pleasantly homelike, lying a yard from the shore. The purdahs were up and showed the lamp-lit table on deck, set for dinner, and flowers, books and chairs, a cosy picture. The light was reflected in the grey river, and waved slightly in the ripple of the current from the anchor chain. A cargo steamer, forsooth! a private yacht is the feeling it gave.

There are only two passengers besides ourselves, a Mr and Mrs S. With the master and mate we make six at dinner, and the concert after, in which the first mate plays piano accompaniments to all the chanties we can scrape together—"Stormy Long,"—"Run, let the Bulgine Run,"—"Away Rio :" cheerful chanties like "The Anchor's Weighed," with its "Fare ye well, Polly, and farewell Sue," and sad, sad songs of ocean's distress, like "Leave her, Johnnie; Its time to leave her." Neither the master nor mate have seen salt water for many a day, but I know their hearts yearn for the wide ocean and tall ships a-sailing; for all the beauties of all the rivers in the world pale beside the tower of white canvas above you, and the surge and send of a ship across the wide sea.

. . . 23rd February.—Kyonkmyoung—not pronounced as spelt, and spelling not guaranteed. We spent the night at above village. Now we are passing a wooded shore, and two remarkable pagodas side by side, like two Italian villas, with flat roofs and windows of western design, each has a white terrace in front with a small pagoda spire, and in the trees there are many white terraces and steps up to them from the river's edge.

. . . The up-river mail has passed us, it had been delayed on a sandbank; we ship an American family party from it. Having lost some hours on the sandbank, they cannot now proceed up the river to Bhamo, as they had intended, so they returned with us to Mandalay. The first gangway plank was hardly down when they were ashore and away like a bullet, with a ricochet and a twang behind; a Silver king, they say, and a future president!—How rapidly

Americans travel, and assimilate facts, and what extraordinary conclusions some of them make.

We slow-going Scots hang on at Mandalay for a little. We have not half seen the place, and wish to spend



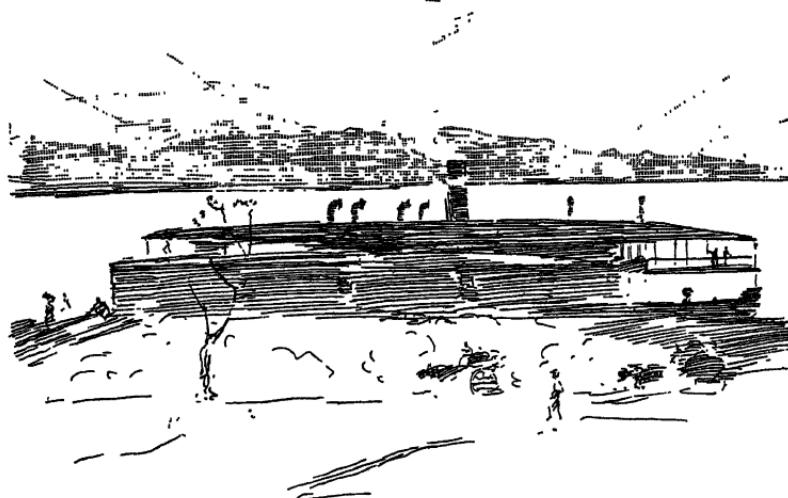
hours and hours at the pagoda, watching the worshippers there, and trying, if possible, to remember enough expressions and forms and colours to use at home. Our fellow passengers, Mr and Mrs S., elect to stay on board. They have some days to spare, waiting for a down-river steam-boat, wisely preferring that, to the bustle through to Rangoon in the train.

. . . Mr S. is playing the piano, G. and I are painting, Mrs S. sewing, and all the morning, from the lower deck, there comes the continual chink of silver rupees, where Captain Robinson and his mate are settling the trade accounts of the trip, blessing the Burmese clerk for having half a rupee too much; funny work for men brought up to "handle reef and steer."

Three steamers, similar to our own, with flats, lie alongside the sandbank, all in black and white, with black and red funnels and corrugated iron roofs, and "Glasgow"

painted astern. Bullock-carts bump along the shore in clouds of dust, and the bales come and go, and trade here is still really picturesque; there are no ugly warehouses or stores, and everything is open and above board—just, I suppose, as trade went on in the days of Adam or Solomon.

Went to the railway station, we were obliged to do so. We must leave the river to get down to Rangoon and Western India, to catch our return P. & O. from Bombay. We have decided to return by the north of India, and not by Ceylon, though we are drawn both ways. Ceylon route by steamer all the way, seems so much easier for tired travellers, than going overland in trains; but what would friends at home say if we missed Benares, Agra, and Delhi.



. . . A native stationmaster, in a perfunctory manner, points out the kind of 1st class carriage we have to travel in. It is not inviting, and we get back to the river, and make a jotting of our steamer and the shore against the evening sky, and the bullock-carts slowly stirring the dust into a golden haze. . . . Then we go to live on shore with friends for a day or two.

I despair of making anything, in the meantime, of the Arrakan Pagoda, and the great golden Buddha with the

wonderful light on it, and the kneeling tribesmen and women from over Asia. It is one of the finest, if not *the* finest, subject for painting I have ever seen, and yet I can't see one telling composition. Looking at the people kneeling, from the side, you can't see the Buddha, and, looking at the Buddha, you only see the peoples' backs.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

FROM the train to Rangoon, you see very little of the country: we felt rather unhappy in it after the comfort of the steamer. A native stationmaster lost half our luggage for us—vowed he'd put it on board. I knew that he knew that he had not done so, but I could do nothing. It was glaringly hot at the station; several Europeans wore black spectacles, and I had to do the same, for needle like pains ran through my eyes since the day on the snipe jheel at Bhamo.

The first part of the journey was smooth enough, but bless me! they brought up the Royal train from Rangoon at ten miles an hour faster than we travel down! How uneasily must have lain a head that is to wear a crown.

We couldn't sleep at night for the carriage seemed to be going in every direction at once—waggled about like a basket, and we shook so much we laughed at a mosquito that aimed at a particular feature. But in the early morning we did actually sleep for a little, and about 4 or 5 A.M. were awakened, for tea, and plague inspection at 6 A.M., about two hours before getting into Rangoon!—a plague on tea and inspectors at that hour of the morning!

It wasn't pure joy that journey. Ah! and it was sad too, getting to the cultivated plains round Rangoon—eternal rice fields and toiling Indians—uglier and uglier as we neared civilisation. The saddest sight of all, the half-bred Burman and Indian woman or man—the woman the worst; with, perhaps, a face of Burmese cast, over-shadowed with the hungry expression of the Indian, and a black thin shank and flat foot showing under the lungy, where should

be rounded calf and clean cut foot. We may be great colonists we Britons, but I fear our stocking Burmah with scourings from India is only great as an evil.

Now I will pass Rangoon in my journal. We stayed a day or two at a lodging in a detached teak villa in a compound which contained native servants, and crows *ad nauseum*—it was dull, stupid and dear, and we were sorry we had not gone to the hotel, and our greatest pleasure was visiting the Shwey Pagoda again, and the greatest unpleasantness was getting on board the British India boat the “Lunka” for Calcutta. We were literally bundled pell mell on board, some twenty passengers and baggage, and some five hundred native troops all in a heap in the waist on top of us—what a miserable muddle. The French passengers smiled derisively at the inefficacy or rather total absence of any system of embarkation of passengers, and the Americans opened their eyes! Always they repeat on board—“Why, you first class passengers don’t pay us.” On the Irrawaddy river boats they say this too, but they make you jolly comfortable for all that.

It was six hours of struggle, mostly in the sun, before I got our things into our cabin, and half our luggage lay on deck for the night with natives camping on it! The officers on board were very pleasant and agreeable, as they were on board the last British India boat we were on, but the want of method in getting passengers and their baggage off the wharf and into boats and on board was almost incredible. . . .¹ There was a vein of amusement, I remember, when I can get my mind off the annoying parts of our “Embarkation.” I got a chanter from a Chinese pedlar in the street in the morning—heard the unmistakeable reedy notes coming along the street as I did business in the the cool office of Messrs Cook & Co., and leaving papers and monies went and met the smiling Chinese pedlar of sweetmeats. who sold me his chanter. The position of the

¹ Getting off at Calcutta was indescribable—if possible worse than the embarkation—*a sauve qui peut*.

notes is the same as on our chanter, and the fingering is the same ; afterwards on board when I played a few notes on it the beady black eyes of the Ghurkas in the waist sparkled, and they pulled out their practice chanters from their kit at once—and there we were !—and the long-legged, almond-eyed Sikhs on their baggage looked on in languid wonder.

Would you like a description of Calcutta ? I wish I could give it. It was a little different from what I expected, smaller, and yet with ever so much more life and bustle on the river than I'd expected. Commerce doesn't go slow on account of heat, and here, as in Burmah, I was surprised to see so much picturesque lading and unlading of cargoes going on by the river banks, and the green grass and trees running from the banks into the town. But we will jump Calcutta, I think, it is too big an order ; but before going on may I say that the architecture is, to my mind, better than it is said to be. In Holdich's " India " it is unfavourably compared with that in Bombay, but do you know, I almost prefer the classic style of Calcutta to the scientific rococco Bombay architecture, but I offer this opinion with the greatest diffidence, for I know the author of " India " is an artist—still—" I know what I like," as the burglar said when he took the spoons.

BENARES.—One evening we took train from Calcutta to Benares. Flat fields of white poppies were on either side, and English park-like scenes, without the mansions, and we thanked our stars we had not to live in what the Norse call " Eng " or meadow land.

The things of interest in Benares are in order—first the Ghats, then a river called the Ganges, and the monkey temple ; of course there are a great many natives, but from a cursory impression of the faces in the crowds, I think they rank after the monkeys.

We arrived on a feast day with the golden beauty of Burmah and its people fresh in our minds, and found

these natives were painting the town red. They slopped a liquid the colour of red ink over their neighbours' more or less white clothes, and threw handfuls of vermillion powder over each other—an abominable shade of vermillion—so roads and people and sides of houses were all stained with these ugly colours ; in fact, at the Ghats or terraces at the river side, where many thousands were congregated, the air was thick with the vermillion dust. From the water's edge up the steps to the palaces and temples and houses at the top, the terraces swarmed with thousands of people, and the talk and mirthless laughter rose and fell like the continuous clamour from a guillemot rookery.

The scenes we met in the streets were only to be described in language of the Elizabethan period. If to-day at home we pass obscurantism for morality, the Indian does the reverse ; he tears the last shreds from our ideas of what Phallic worship might once have been.

I think the Ghats are the most nauseating place in the world ; there, is Idolatry, in capital letters—the most terrible vision that a mind diseased could picture in horrible nightmare ! for you see thousands of inferior specimens of men and women dabbling in the water's edge, *doing all and every particular of the toilet in the same place almost touching each other*, and right amongst them are dead people in pink or white winding sheets being burned, and the ashes and half-burned limbs being shoved into the water—and I forgot—there's a main sewer comes into the middle of this.

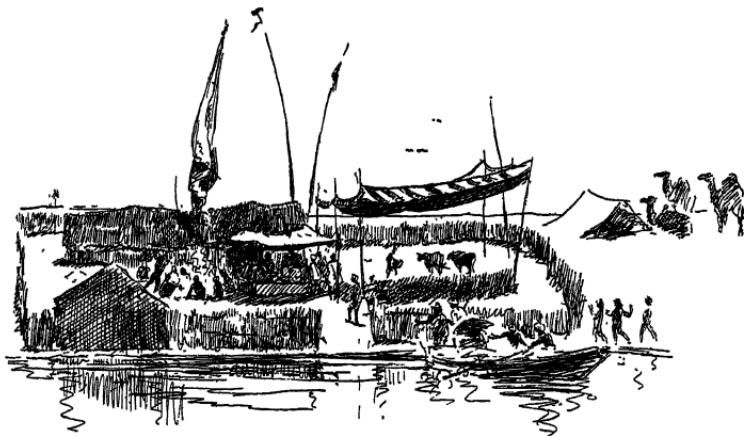
We got on to a boat with a cabin on it, and sat on its roof on decrepit cane chairs, and the rowers below with makeshift oars gradually pulled us up and down the face of the Ghats—what oars, and what a ramshackle tub of a boat—too old and tumble-down for a fisherman's hen run at home.

Holy Gunga ! What a crowd of men and women line the edge of these steps knee deep in the water, and babble and jabber and pray, day after day, and pretend to wash themselves, without soap ! Only one man of the thousands

I saw was proportionably shaped ; and one woman was white, an Albino, I wish I could forget her bluey whiteness ! and I saw boys doing Sandow exercises, evidently trying to bring up their biceps—poor little devils—how can they ? They haven't time—they will be married and reproducing other little fragilities like themselves, before they are out of their teens !

The monkey temple is full of monkeys, and they have less apish expressions than the priests. The Prince of Wales saw it the patron told me, and added, "Princess give handsome presents—also Maharajahs—from 100 rupees to 50." So I gave one, very willingly, to get out, and thought it cheap at the price. Besides the nastiness of the monkeys, there was much blood of sacrifices drying on the ground and altars, and this was covered with flies ; there are some abominable rites in this temple, but they are now *not supposed* to sacrifice children.

Perhaps it was because I was tired with sight-seeing, perhaps because the Ghats are really so terrible that I felt their picturesqueness was lost on me, so I told my guide to direct my rowers' little energy towards the far side of



the river where there are no houses, and there is quiet and clean river sand.

On the sands we found a fakir had established his

camp—quite a low church fellow, I suppose, to the Brahmin mind. He sat over against this sacred Benares, and told those freethinkers, who came across at times, that his was the only one and true religion, and that the Phallic saturnalia on the opposite shore was damned, and the Ganges water was of no use whatever in the way of religion.

His camp covered an acre of sand and was fenced with cane, and he had camels and cows and many followers, and though they had only one yellow waist-cloth between them all, which he wore, he must have been well enough off to provide the loaves and fishes for so many. He sat all the time with his legs crossed, and read Sanskrit in a low, very well modulated voice, whilst people from far and near came and bowed, and sometimes, if they were worthy, touched his feet, and he would give them a little look from his quiet intense eyes, and the least inclination of his head, a movement and look a king might have envied, it was at the same time so reserved and yet graciously beneficent. His hair and beard were long and slightly curling and tawny at the ends, and his face was dusted with grey ash which emphasised his rather potent eyes. His features in profile were pure Greek, and on his low forehead there was a touch of gold. His particular followers or disciples had the silly expression of a mesmerist's subjects ; they sat in the dust stark naked and unashamed, and looked happy and exceedingly foolish.

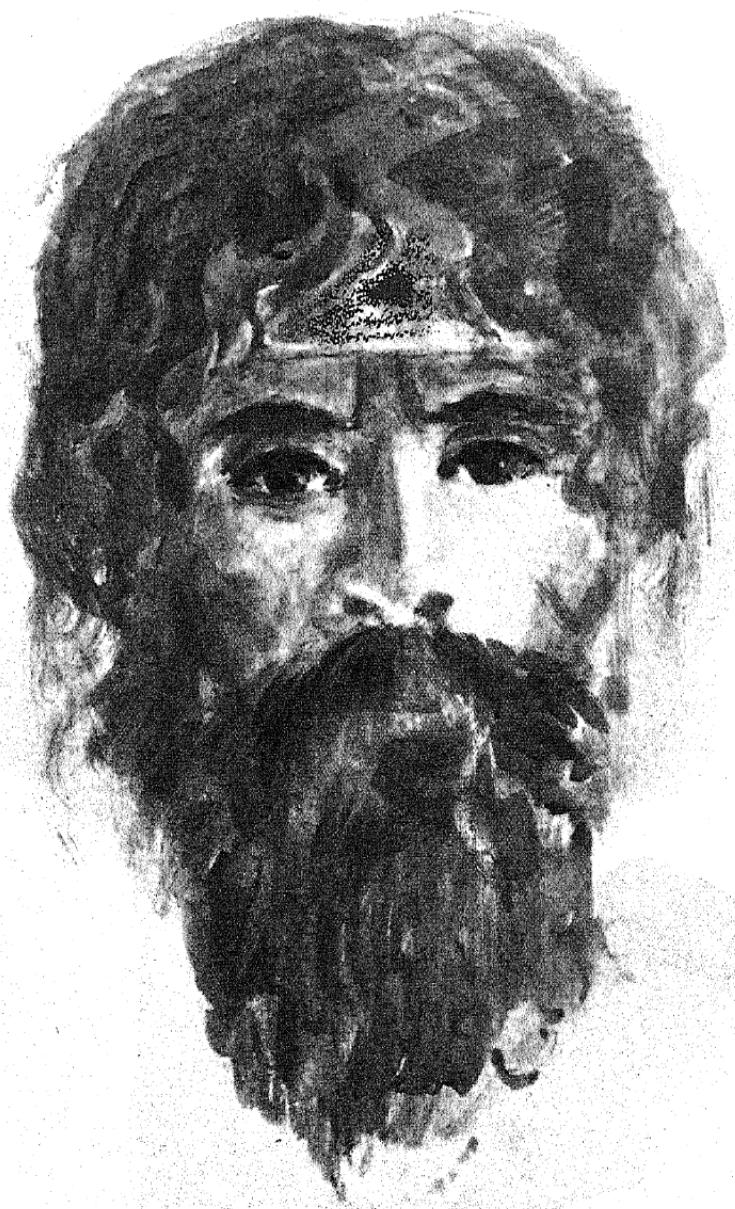
The way this fakir made money I was told, is simplicity itself ; he merely gives a pass with his hand above his head, and lo there is a sovereign in his palm, or he makes a pass at his toe and there is another !

My Mohammedan guide, who told me about this fakir, was rather a fine specimen and had read much ; and though he did not belong to the same church as the fakir, he held him in great respect, and he told me very seriously—that he could raise the dead—he knew a man who knew another man who had actually seen it done !

The fakir sat on a little dais in front of a hut with an

awning over him. He passed word to a satellite in a cloak that he would be pleased were I to land, and I told my guide to tell him I would be pleased to alight from my ramshackle tub and make his portrait, and he gently inclined his head, so I descended from my barge roof, and stood opposite him on the sand and drew, and after half-an-hour or so he saw that I was tired standing and sent for a seat, but I of course could not change my point of view, and no doubt his followers wondered why I bothered standing in the sun when I might have easily sat in the shade and done nothing. Next day I went on the river and stopped in passing his place and showed him the coloured portrait, of which he gently expressed his approval and signified that he would be pleased to accept a copy. So I made one, and it is now glazed and framed and worshipped by his disciples. He gave me his blessing in exchange—he did not make any passes for sovereigns—but he gave me a seed or two to eat for a particular purpose, and there is no result so far—and though he did not convert me I left him with a certain respect for his great dignity of manner, and for his evident desire and ability to obtain power over men's minds. Perhaps with all his study and knowledge he still wonders why a man should stand some hours in the heat playing with pencil and paper and water colours. I am told he believes in only one god, unfortunately I forget which; but there are 333,000,000 gods in India, so perhaps it's a matter of no great consequence to them, or the Deity, or us.

One is conscious at Benares just now of a pervading effort to proselytise. There is this fakir on one side of the river with his troop, covering their nakedness with a little dust and ashes, and priests of all kinds and the populace painting themselves red on the other side; then there is Mrs Besant running some new sort of Hindooism or "damned charlatanism," as Lafcadio Hearn would have put it. And there are various Scottish and English Church Missions making special efforts to secure converts, but they pay far



more than my fakir does per head—soul I mean. The fakir has secured two hundred recognised converts and disciples in his own camp ; he, however, has the advantage over other missionaries in his method, which I have described, of obtaining supplies. Each disciple costs him only one rupee per day, so my guide tells me, and he says he is absolutely reliable ; so they must do themselves well. If I stayed a few days longer I'd start some new philosophy myself, or revive an old one. And now I think of it, I believe mine once floated would knock all the others endways—to begin with I'd have my Benares or Mecca in some art bohemia, and I'd raise a blue banner inscribed with the word BEAUTY in gold, and that would be the watchword . . . No one to enroll who could not make, say a decent rendering of the Milo in sculpture or drawing—or write or play. . . .

Our places of study would be the churches that are empty during the week—we surely could not be refused the use of them for the five or six days they are not used ! the last half of the sixth day would give us time to remove all our beautiful things, so they would be the same as usual on Sundays—nothing like detail in going in for a scheme of this kind. And he or she who could produce something beautiful in either sculpture, colour, music, or being, or even making a hat, would be high in the priesthood, and might receive offerings of food and raiment in return for instruction given (like the Burmese Phoungies from the general public), so the general public would obtain merit, and men like Sargent (if they could drop their academical degrees), La Touche, Anglada Camarassa, Sarolea, Sidannier would be very high in the priesthood ; and we'd have Velasquez and Whistler, Montecelli and the like for saints and—I see I have left no place for scientists and musicians. But we'd have heaps of room for them, of course.

This isn't all nonsense you know !—in fact it is possibly all sense. I'd like to see the philosophy carried out experimentally say for three years in a bad district, such as

between Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood. I believe the people would look handsomer and happier than they are at present after the second year. Given Beauty for our standard and first goal, Goodness, Mercy, Courage, Manliness, and Womanliness, and good looks, would surely follow, and the Creator might be trusted for the rest.

I am positively anxious, in the present condition of things, about what will happen when some of us come to the gates of Heaven.—I very much doubt if a knowledge of the ten Commandments will pass us in—and even if we do get in, and secure a mansion, and it is really as beautiful as described, how uncomfortable many of us will feel who have not been made familiar with the subject of beauty below! I fear there may be awkward questions put about what we have learned besides the ten Commandments; we may be asked what we have observed of God's works. For example, "What is the colour of wood smoke across a blue sky," or "the colour of white marble against a yellow sunset." Perhaps you may be passed in with even a solfeggio, but just think!—suppose you are asked to "describe the most expressive movement in the action of a man throwing a stone," or "how many heads there are in the Milo!" . . .

Such philosophising is quite the thing here at Benares—everyone does.

But to go back to the people and the Ghats I must—for my own protection—for some one who reads these notes may have also waded through the exquisite writing of Pierre Loti on the subject, and may conclude I am untruthful. He says, he saw on the steps bathing, people "à la fois sveltes et athlétiques," and lovely women, dead and alive, with clinging draperies that resemble the "Victoire aptére,"—well, I vow!—I've studied the human form for about twenty-five years and I repeat that what I say is true, that of the hundreds of men I saw distinctly of the thousands bathing, I only saw one man passably well made. I saw very finely built Sikhs from northern India in Burmah, and others at Madras, but all the people on the

banks of the Ganges had very poor muscular development. And these lovely women whom Pierre Loti sees in such numbers—they have no calves—whoever saw beauty without the rudiments of a calf ! But perhaps Pierre Loti does ; if he can write about India, *sans les Anglais*—(he means British¹) he may fancy Hamlet without the Prince, or Venus with an Indian shank. But we forgive him ; for that picture, off Iceland, the stuffy brown lamplit cabin in the fishing lugger, the tobacco smoke and the Madonna in the corner, and outside on deck the silvery daylight and the pure air of the Arctic midnight.”

I think military life in Benares must be slow, the soldier seems to have so much routine work in India when there is no frontier campaign going on. It must be irksome for anyone fond of fighting. My cousin here (a Captain) is Cantonment Magistrate, which means he has to turn his sword into a foot rule and do Government’s factory work—lets you a plot of land for your house and sees your neighbour hangs out his washing in proper order—then will hang a man for murder or fine another for selling you goat instead of mutton, and so on and so forth. Multifarious little things on to many of which might hang a history—for instance taking a stray bull across the river with the respect due to such a sacred encumbrance and without hurting the religious feelings of the Emperor’s Hindoo subjects.

Another soldier host we had in India in Delhi—a Fet-tesian by the way ; in his palace we studied the Red Chuprassie and received an inkling of how States are governed, and how the hot-bed of Mohammedan and Hindoo revolution is kept in order. Five to five were his office hours, you advocates of eight hour bills ! In the rest of the twenty-four hours he was on the alert for sudden duty calls, yet he painted with me after five, with more keenness than professional artists I know at home.

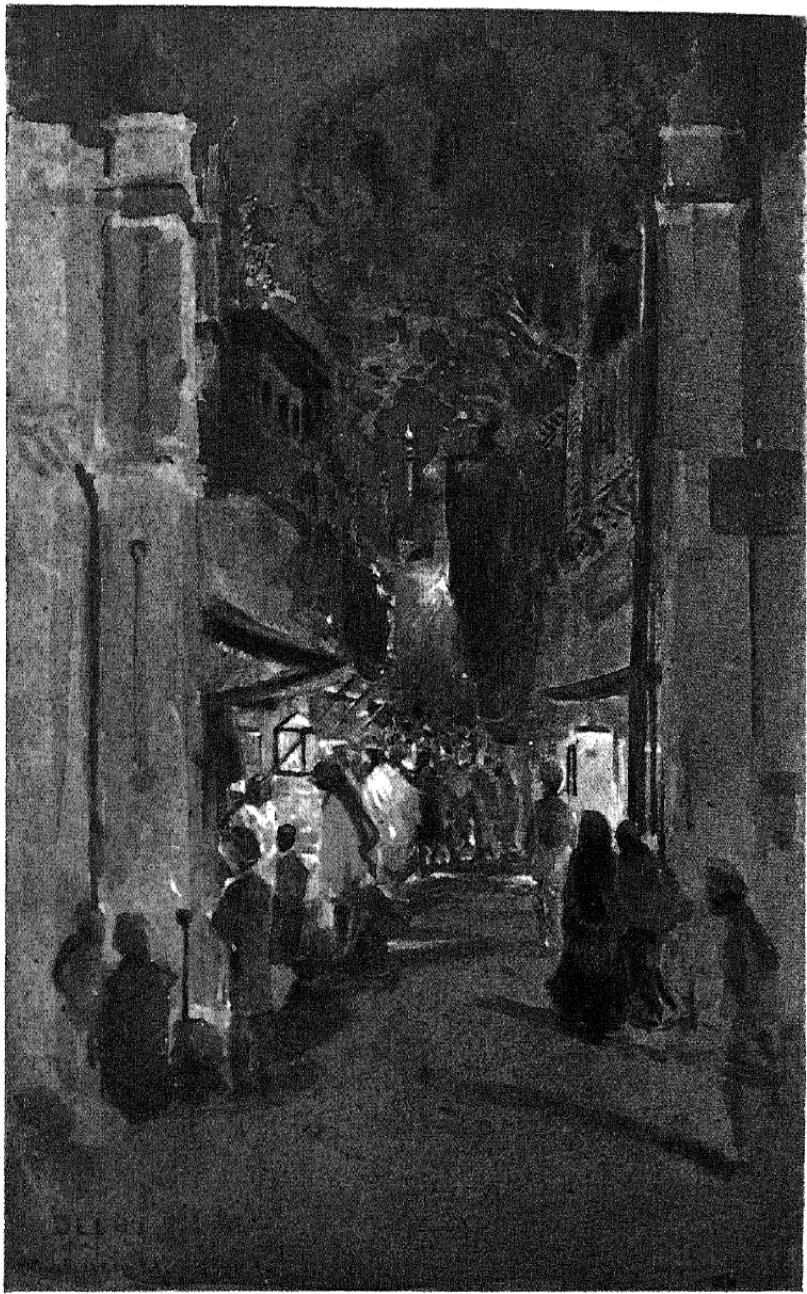
¹ “ *L’Inde sans les Anglais.*”

So within a few months out here I have met more men of arms, art, and manners than I meet in as many years at home. It is a very sad part this of our extended Empire—the good men taken from home to the frontiers, and I don't know that we can afford it. Personally I'd rather have our little country as it was in the time of James IV.—well defended—with our good men at home, a chivalrous Court, and the best fleet of the time, than to be as at present without a name or Court—a milch cow to the Empire.

I had the pleasure of seeing this host engaged in a congenial duty—that of raising the statue to Nicholson. We were taken to the spot where he fell, and saw where Roberts stood, and heard tales of many other great "Englishmen"—be—dad !

• • • • •
We lived almost on the Ridge and its russet-coloured boulders, and looked slightly down to Delhi (I'd always pictured the besiegers looking up at the walls). How astonishingly fresh it all is; the living deadly interest. Gracious—the stones on the wall haven't yet rolled into the ditch from the bombarding—you can almost smell the powder smoke in the air—and it is still hot!

• • • • •
It was very hot going to Agra. I've a recollection of the journey which seems funny now; "When pleasure is, what past pain was." We had been saving a thirst all morning, and at a junction went absolutely parched with heat and fatigue for ice and soda, and perhaps a little mountain-dew, for we were very faint. And there was no soda water!—and there was no ice!—but there was whisky—and warm lemonade! I'd to sprint along the metals to our carriage in the white heat, and there got two bottles of hot soda. So we finally had a little tepid toddy, and sat and grimly studied our countrymen's expressions as they came into the restaurant hot and tired, from different trains, and asked for the drink of our country. You'd have thought they would have sworn, but they did not, which



gives you an idea of the climate ; they mostly looked too tired ; at mid-day on an Indian railway one has barely sufficient energy left to say tut-tut !

Getting near Agra from the plains was very pleasant !—the ground rises a little and becomes sandier and less cultivated, so the air is clean and refreshing.

We saw the Taj at first in distance over this almost white sandy soil and grey ferash bushes — saw it slightly blurred by the quivering heat off the ground, and against a pale, hot, blue sky, and through thin hot brown smoke from our engine, and its general outline in the distance was that of a cruet stand—and as we came within a mile it seemed to be made of brick, white-washed !

Then we whirled into the station and came out amongst solid Mogul architecture of dull, red, sandstone—splendidly massive and simple—what a surprise ! Then we visited the Taj Mahal, and ever hence, I hope the vision of white marble and greenery will be ours !

CHAPTER XXXIX

AGRA.—I find India generally speaking is a little vexatious, and think that perhaps the youth who stays at home may after all score over the youth who is sent to roam. There is a little feeling all the time which you felt as a child on seeing all sorts of delights arranged for dinner guests, and you had toast and eggs in the nursery. Here we have just time to see what sport there is; jolly social functions, pig-sticking, picnics, shooting of all kinds, riding, splendid things to paint, and subjects to study, pleasant people to meet—and have to cut up our time between trains and guides and sights.

I think if I were to come to India again, I'd spend the cold weather in one place, get to know the white people and the surrounding districts, and merely listen to tales of fair Cashmere.

This preamble leads to notes of a somewhat qualified day at Black Buck: two day's dip into sport against time. I got one buck the first day, and could have taken more, they were literally in hundreds: this is how the story unrolls itself.

Got away at 6.30 A.M., before dawn, in a two-horse open carriage, a shikari on the box, a syce behind, and interpreter on the front seat, and beside me a regular Indian luncheon basket big enough for an army, and a great double 450 cordite express that would have done for the Burmese Gaur.

The roads and mud huts were all the one warm clay-colour, and the light was becoming violet, with a faint pink in the sky. In the country the roads and fields were

almost milk-colour, and trees with yellow flowers were on either side. We met white donkeys with their burdens, and white oxen drawing heavy wooden-wheeled carts all dust coloured, and the only black in the soft colouring was that of the early crows.

. . . On the plains to either side there are patches of green crop, and away to our right the minarets of the burial place of Akbar. Doves, pigeons, starlings, kites, green parrots sit or flutter overhead as we pass, all as tame as hens. Gradually the trees throw long shadows, and old Sol comes up behind us, and grins at our overcoats.

From the eighth milestone I see a doe, and the shikari spots it at the same instant; and two adjutant cranes, silvery grey with dark heads like ostriches—about six feet high, and a pair of horn-bills pass overhead—lots to interest one every mile of the drive. At ten miles out I spotted three does, and we got out to see if there wasn't a buck somewhere, and a few minutes after I found him (first, being some inches taller than the shikari). There was only a chance of getting within range by a barefaced walk-round and then a crawl behind a knoll of old clay wall—this we did, and I let off at about fifty yards and went over the buck's shoulder and couldn't get in a second. Truth to tell I wasn't quite sure whether I wasn't dreaming, the whole proceeding was so unexpected and unfamiliar—ten miles out from a town, at eight in the morning and to have a shot at a deer with no one to say you nay, I could hardly believe it. And besides, to add to the unfamiliarity of this kind of deer shooting, there were native cultivators all round, within every half mile or so, in groups of two or three.

I was very sad. The shikari said nothing, but counted it out at seventy yards. Looking over the top of the dyke I'd thought it a hundred and probably took too full a foresight; anyway it was an abominably easy shot to miss I wished very much I'd taken a few practice shots with the cumbersome weapon.

. . . We wander many a mile and it begins to get warm. We rest in the shade of a group of mangrove trees on the hard, dry earth, and beside us waves a patch of green corn. I am very sad indeed—I have missed two beautiful black buck, or worse, the last I fired at, a lying down shot (on thorns), after a run and a stalk to about 140 yards, was a trifle too end-on, and I hit the poor beggar in the jaw I believe, and we followed it for miles. Then my heart rejoiced, for a native said it had fallen behind some bushes, but another said he'd seen it going on, very slowly, and on we went after it; meantime we saw many other buck and does, but we did our best and failed to pick up the one fired at.

So at ten we rest and I sit like Gautama Buddha under a tree and think life is all a misery, and my followers bring food and drink and I refuse almost all, but smoke a little and swear a lot. Overhead a pigeon tries to coo to the end of its sentence and loses the word at the end every time, and a green parrot fights with a crow and finally drives it into another tree, and flies eat my lunch, or breakfast rather, and ants eat me, and I gnaw my pipe with vexation.

I go over all excuses—new rifle—far too heavy—accustomed to single barrel—unaccustomed to blaze of light,—Really, at the first shot, the rising sun on back-sight and foresight made them sparkle like diamonds, and the buck in shadow was a ghost—and being out of condition with travel—and so on and so on—and say fool at the end.—We get up after half-an-hour, but my belief in my luck is shaken; we walk into the heat again and dazzling light and white hard sandy soil and come to bushes and patches of corn here and there, and natives lifting water for them from wells.

I've had a grand day's exercise, and feel much more human and fit again. I've sent a soul into the invisible so my man tells me—shot a buck at full split—shot it aft

a bit. As its gore dyed the hard hot earth and its exquisite side, I asked my tall Mohammedan guide, when it was dead, where its soul had gone. "To God," he said shortly—"And where will mine go?" "To Hell," he replied quite politely but firmly, but he added to qualify the statement, something about some Mohammedans believing in reincarnation. I suppose I am damned in his opinion because I am not a follower of the prophet, not because I have taken life, but damned or not it wasn't a bad shot; it was the fourth time too, I spotted deer before my shikari, and pulled him back in time, and so in a way I felt comforted for bad shooting.

Five does and no buck were visible, but we trusted the buck was hidden by some of the soft feathery green ferash bushes they were feeding in. We made a circuit and came close to a group of natives and oxen drawing water, and for some reason or another, possibly the guide I'd left behind alarmed the deer, they came galloping past and a buck with a very good head in the middle; a doe beyond, passing to the front made me hit him a little far back in lumbar region, instead of behind the shoulder. It restored my faith in hand and eye a little, and yet the killing qualified the day's enjoyment. I suppose we will never quite understand whether we should or should not kill. I suppose killing this buck will save a little of the natives' corn, and they will have some meat and I shall have a head to show.

To see these exquisitely graceful deer galloping across the plains is a sight never to be forgotten: it is the nearest thing to flying. The bucks with their twisted black horns and blackish brown coats and white underneath, the does cream-coloured and white, almost invisible against the soil in the glare of light. All spring into the air with their feet tucked up at the same spot, with a spurt of dust as if a bullet had struck the soil beneath their feet. You see poor sheep trying to do the same thing.

Some natives carry the dead buck. We have about

five miles to tramp, partly over waste ground, partly along almost unshaded road. After three miles the deer carriers sit down and "light up" under a tree, so we follow their example, and send a message on for the carriage.

The men are joined by various native wayfarers who stop and pass the time of day: they light a little smouldering fire of leaves and twigs to keep the sociable pipe going. It is a little earthen cup without a stem; they hold this in the points of their fingers and suck the smoke between their thumbs so the pipe touches no one's lips, and they have a drink from a well, poured from a bowl into the palms of their hands. My Hindoo shikari I find will take a nip with pleasure from my flask in his little brass bowl, but he would loose caste if he took soda water in the same way, so he tramps to the well and at great trouble draws a cup. The tall snub-nosed Mohammedian looks on with scorn at the inconsistency and touches neither water nor spirit.

We have a longish wait, but there's lots to look at, still new to me. The girls and boys at the well, and weeding the barley, a vulture and its ugly mate on household affairs bent, in a tree, and green parrots and squirrels all busy. It seems to me the squirrels are rooting out the white ants from their earthy works up the tree trunks above me. Possibly they are just doing it to put dust in my eyes.

Then we drive homewards, the buck on the splashboard, and pass a splendid group of peacocks and peahens under two small trees, nearly a dozen of them within seventy yards, and I handle my big rifle, then my Browning Colt, and nearly fire, for I'd fain add a peacock to my pistol-bag, but they look so tremendously domestic that I haven't the heart, and besides, they are sacred I am told, and possibly it would be unlucky to shoot them. My men say "shoot," but not encouragingly, and its my unlucky day; I'd possibly miss, and hit a native beyond. How you manage to fire a bullet in this country without killing a

black buck or a native is a wonder. Coming near Agra, I passed a group of young officers in khaki riding out; they and their mounts looked as hard as nails; they were going pig-sticking, they were to be envied.

9th March.—The choice lay between an early rise to see the Taj by moonlight, and an early rise to drive fifteen miles to a place where black buck do abound. My primeval instinct prevails against the perhaps better suggestion of my better half. At 5 A.M. the carriage has not yet come so I have twenty minutes to make a lamplit study and reflections generally—Have rifle ready, some soda water, tobacco, and a new stock of hope and faith in my aim.

. . . Here come my men at last, with stealthy steps so as not to disturb the sleeping travellers in our caravansary. The shikari has covered his everyday dress of old Harris tweeds with a white sheet, and might be anyone, and my long Mohammedan guide and interpreter is also in white this day. We get all on board very quietly, and rumble away along the dark dusty road.

We go along at a good rate, with two good horses, and two further on waiting to change; our landau runs smoothly, though it must date to before the Mutiny. Its springs are good, and the road we follow, which Akbar made, is smooth of surface. There is pale moonlight, and the air is fragrant. The hours before dawn dreamily pass, and we nod, and look up now and then to see clay walls and trees dusky against the night sky, and our thoughts go back to the grand old buildings we leave behind us to the north in Agra. The red stone Fort, and Palace, and Taj, and the marble courts seem to become again alive, and full of people and colour and movement, a gallant array, and the fountains bubble, and Akbar plays living chess with his lovely wives, in colour and jewels, on his marble courts.

. . . And we dream on; and we are on the dusty road in the moonlight, riding along, dusky figures at our side,

knee to knee ; the dust hangs on their mail, and dulls the moon's sparkle on the basinets. We are jogging south on Akbar's road with Akbar's men on a foray, or is it a great invasion ? Then there comes a shout, from in front, and an order and we awake—and it is only some bullock-carts in the way, all dusty : and on we go again. And Akbar's soldiers go back to the pale land of memory, and the light comes up, and I see my Mohammedan guide's strong face, and the driver, and the little Hindoo shikari in his wrappings on the box, and the light gets brighter, and, what was vague and mysterious, dust and moonlight becomes prosaic flat barley-fields, with white-clad figures picking weeds, and people at the roadside cottages going about with lights, looking after domestic matters, and men sit huddled round tiny fires and pass the morning pipe around—they, apparently feel it chilly.

The very hot morning we spent wandering after elusive herds of black buck, one of which I missed. A grand black fellow, with horns I could see through the glass, beat all record, missed at 200 yards, both barrels, couldn't get nearer, and anyone may have this double 450 cordite express and all its patents for price of old iron. I could have smitten a bannie both times at home at the distance—I'm sure this thing throws inches high.

However, the weariness and the fret of the hot morning ends in a delicious grove of trees that might be limes, plane and ash, and in the middle of this bosky knoll there is a pool and a little temple, picturesque to a degree at fifty yards, hideous close. The light filters through the branches and falls on the dried mud and leaves.

As my man lays down my bag and useless weapon at the foot of the central tree, there's a crash in the leaves above, and down and away goes a glorious peacock. I try to calculate at which end of it I would fire had I a gun. Its tail is so gorgeous you couldn't fire at it, and its neck is also too beautifully blue to touch with shot ; a minute after another sails down, and goes off like a running

pheasant. Doves come and flutter and coo above us, and a pariah dog prowls round timidly. It looks as if it had never wagged its tail in all its sad life, and it swallows a chunk of my chicken at a gulp, and its tail never moves, poor beast. The hot winds sough through the branches, and my men murmur away to each other under a neighbouring tree, possibly about the Sahib, who is such a poor shot, and, as our language is limited, I can't brag about swagger shots in other days. One needs a friend to shoot with, alone you lose half the charm. If you get hipped with a miss you can then growl out loud to a sympathetic ear, and blow smoke over the day together. There's only the pariah dog to talk to here, so I eat lunch and smoke "my lone,"—"here, old Bicky, you can wolf the rest of the lunch,"—you haven't much appetite the time the bag is empty.

An hour or two over burning sand, and I spot a doe and a fawn amongst the grey-green thorn bushes, and away they go, skipping and jumping as if anyone thought of interfering with their gentle lives! . . . Two or three more hours tramp without a shot, and we come to the by-road again, distinguished from the rest of the dry land by wheel-ruts, and the pad of bare feet. We have six miles to walk to our carriage—my kingdom for a pony! but we must trudge along—the guide, shikari, and syce trailing away behind. They are rather tired, and the writer rather despondent.

A lift of the eye to the left, and a thousand yards off, I see faint forms of does, then I spot a buck!—question, can we spare the time? four miles to walk, fifteen to drive, and the night train to catch at seven. We risk the time, and Fortune smiles, for we have not gone 500 yards off the path, when another lot grows out of the ground to my left, and again a beautiful buck with splendid horns in their midst—a quick standing shot got him through the heart, and no pain or death struggle.

Then more trudging—it is hot, and the sand deep, and the thirst the worst I've had—so dry we were, that we could hardly speak—but no matter, we have succeeded, and there is a bottle of soda water four miles ahead ; it will be warm though. The dust rises along the horizon and moves along in gentle whirlwinds, and the few trees there are, are close cropped of both branches and foliage, to feed the natives' goats and sheep. It is a famished, parched land, with far too many people. Driving to Agra, we came across another herd of deer, and got the best buck almost within a hundred yards of the trunk road.

.
7.30 we are in the train again—Pullman car restaurant train—electric light and cool air, and a sweep of blue moonlit plain and sky passing the windows, a change from the heat and the baked white plain of the day. It is the smoothest going carriage we have been in, in India, and there are waiters in white to bring iced drinks, and an excellent dinner . . . And we think of lunch again, in the grove by the Temple, and the peacocks bustling their grandeur out of the verdure.

If I could invent stories, I'd come and live at Agra, and write about the Moguls, as Irving wrote the tales of the Alhambra, poor little Alhambra, it has its own charm, and it is rather a shame to drag it in beside the buildings of Northern India ; how little it seems, its architecture, and ornament, and its stories, compared with these Mogul palaces, forts, and gardens, and the love and war associated with them. I see I have page after page in my journal of attempts to describe the Taj Mahal and its gardens, and now I find them very difficult to understand ; so I think it would not be wise to try to put them down here, at the end of rather a rag-tag journal—to try to describe perhaps the most perfectly beautiful thing in the world. No—it is too beautiful, to be treated of in the last pages of a journal.

. . . If I were asked what three scenes in the world pleased

me most, they would all be white.—A ring, miles wide, of square-topped icebergs in the Antarctic, rose pink in the midnight sun, refracted and reflected in a calm, lavender sea—the white marble court and white domes of the Pearl Mosque of Agra, and the blue overhead in stillness of hot mid-day, and the Taj Mahal in late afternoon, with its marble growing grey, and the flowers in the gardens closing to sleep.



SHA JEHAN,
Builder of the Taj Mahal.

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